MARVEL

BLACK WIDOW

MARVEL TEAM-UP

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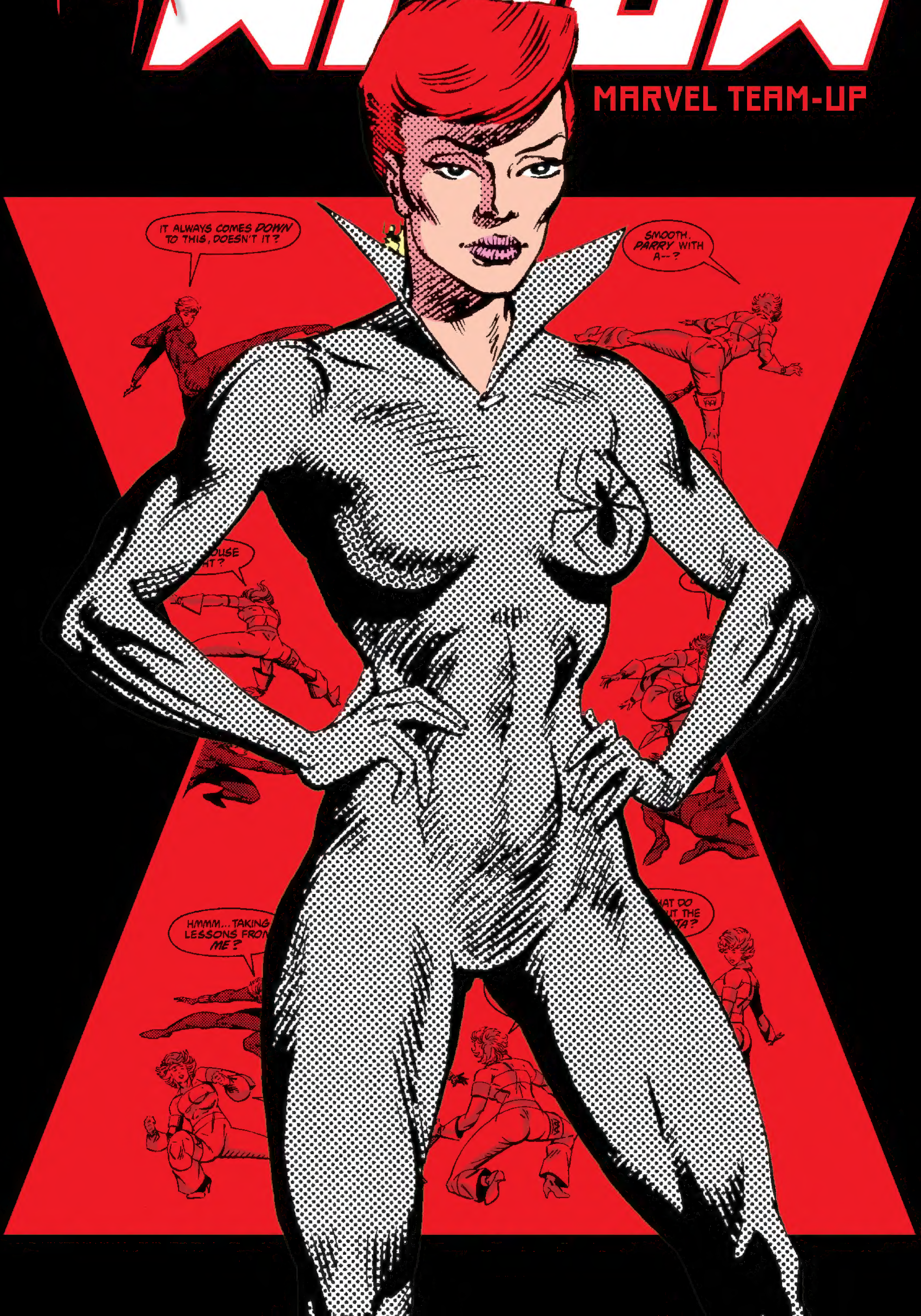
IT ALWAYS COMES *DOWN* TO THIS, DOESN'T IT?
SMOOTH. *PARRY* WITH A--?
HMMM... TAKING LESSONS FROM *ME*?

BLACK WIDOW

MARVEL TEAM-UP

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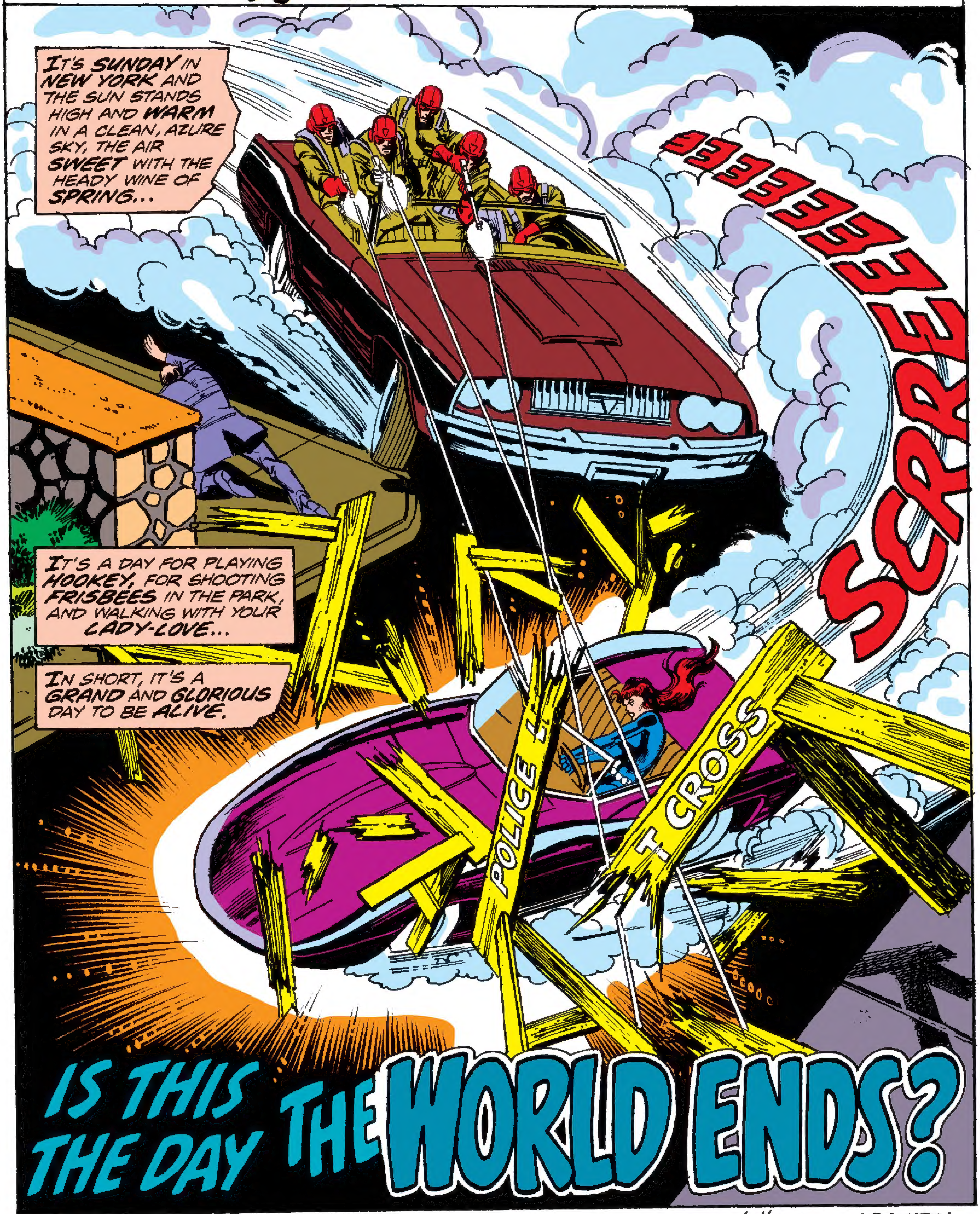
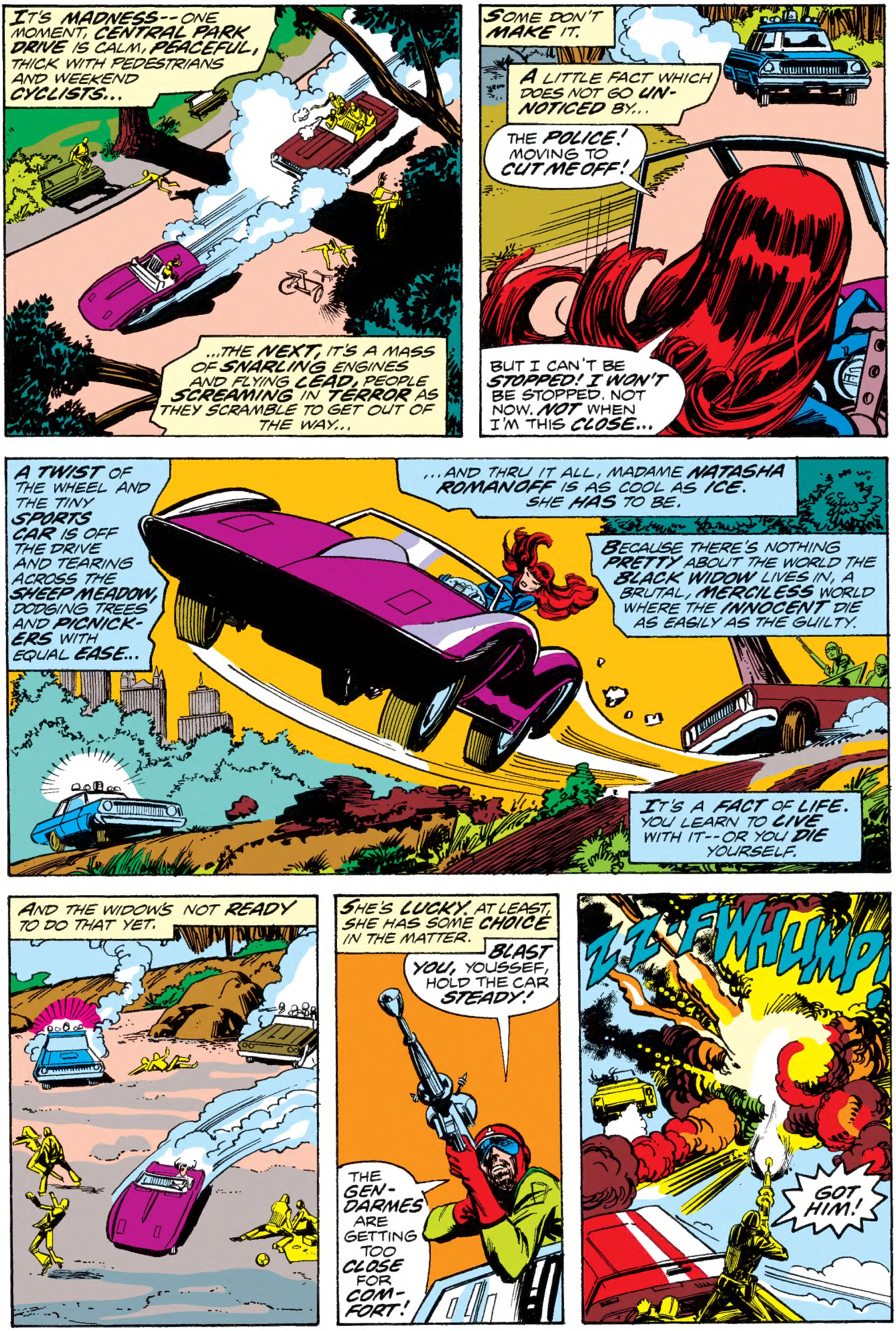
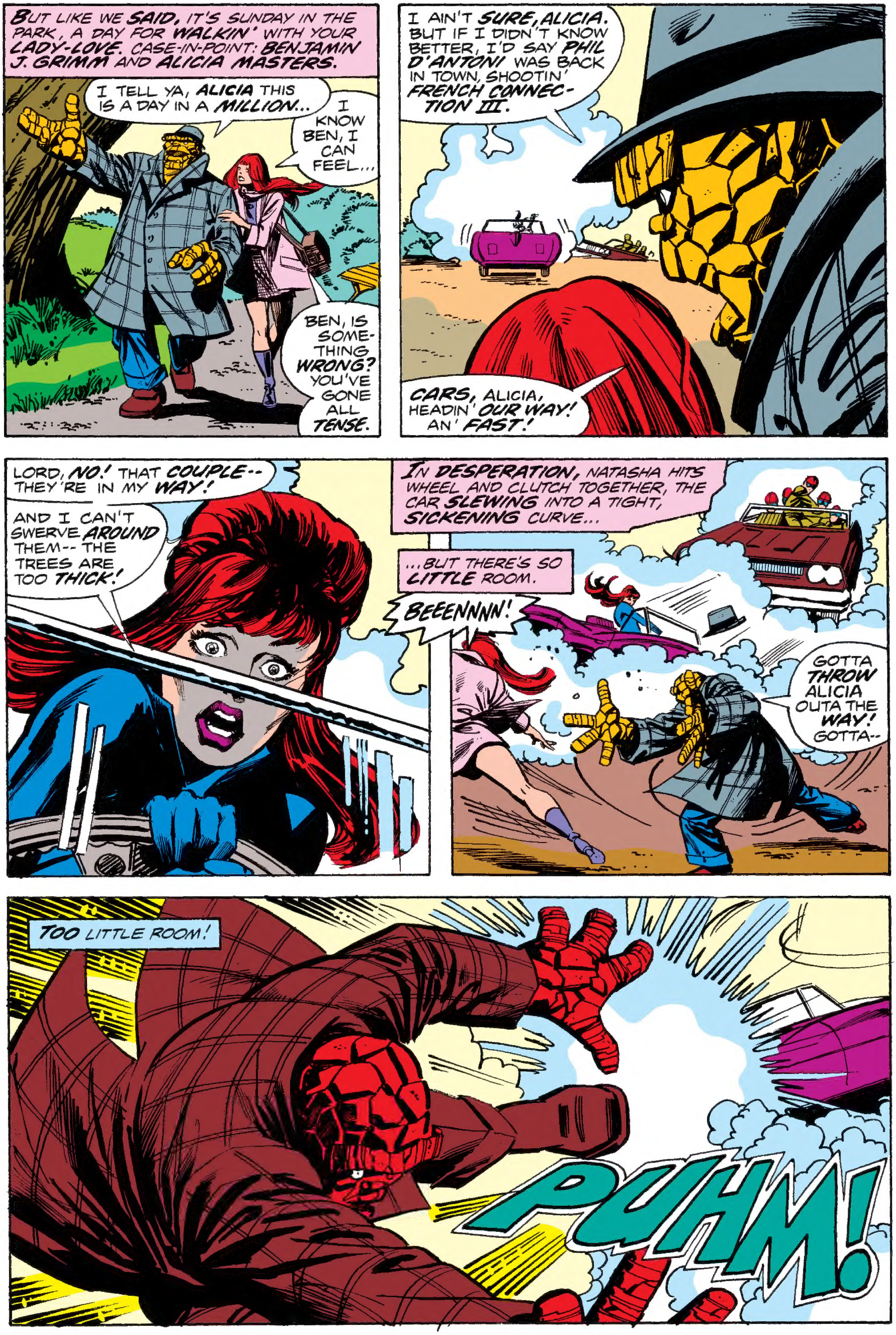
MARVEL TWO IN ONE
MARVEL COMICS GROUP™
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
25¢
10 JULY 02906
MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE
PRESENTS
THE THING™
AND THE
BLACK WIDOW™
KEEP THEM JOKERS OFF'A ME, WIDDER-LADY! IF I DROP THIS BLASTED BOMB...
...THE WHOLE CRUMMY PLANET GOES BOOM!
IS THIS THE DAY THE WORLD ENDS?

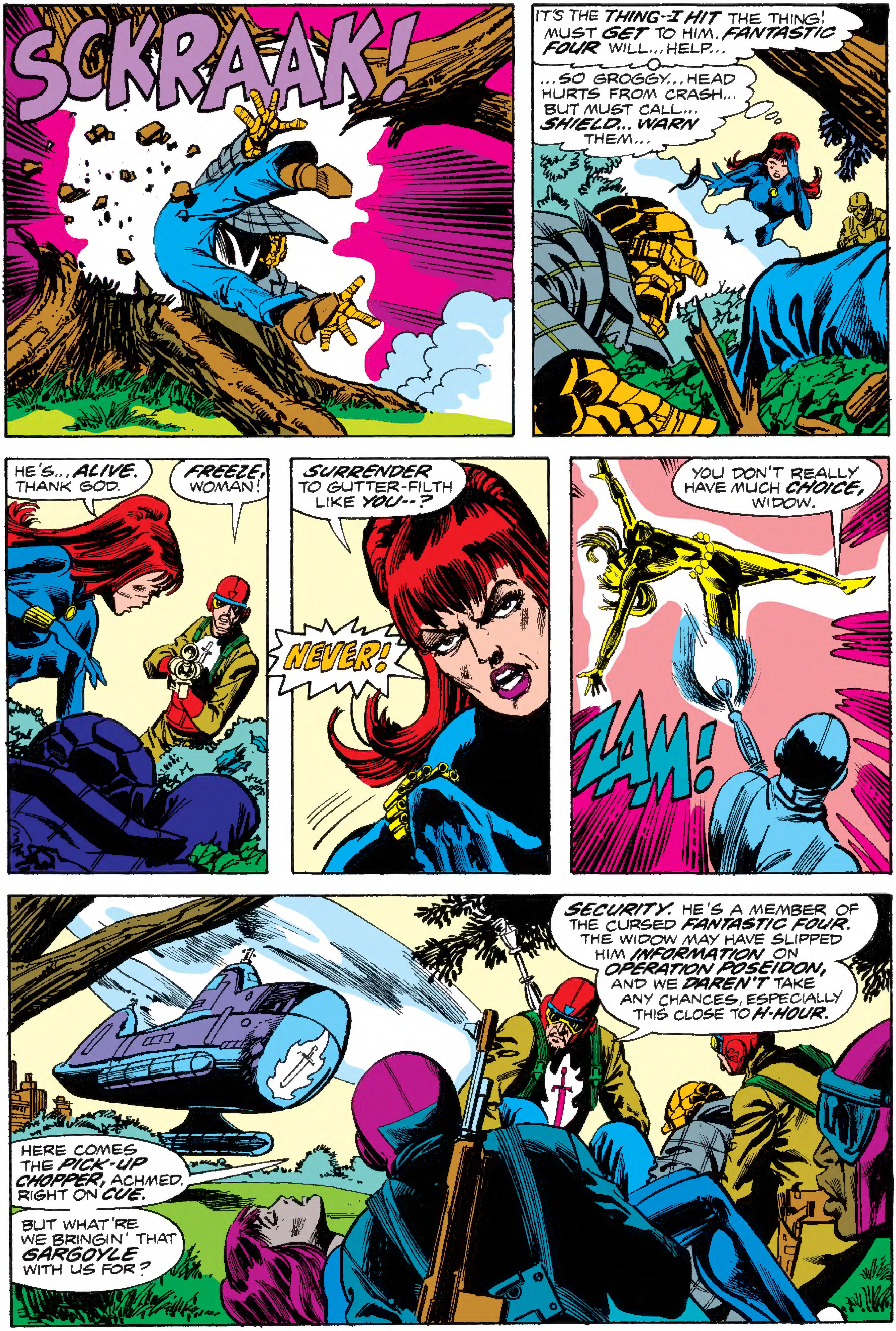
STAN LEE Presents: THE THING™ and THE BLACK WIDOW™ TOGETHER!

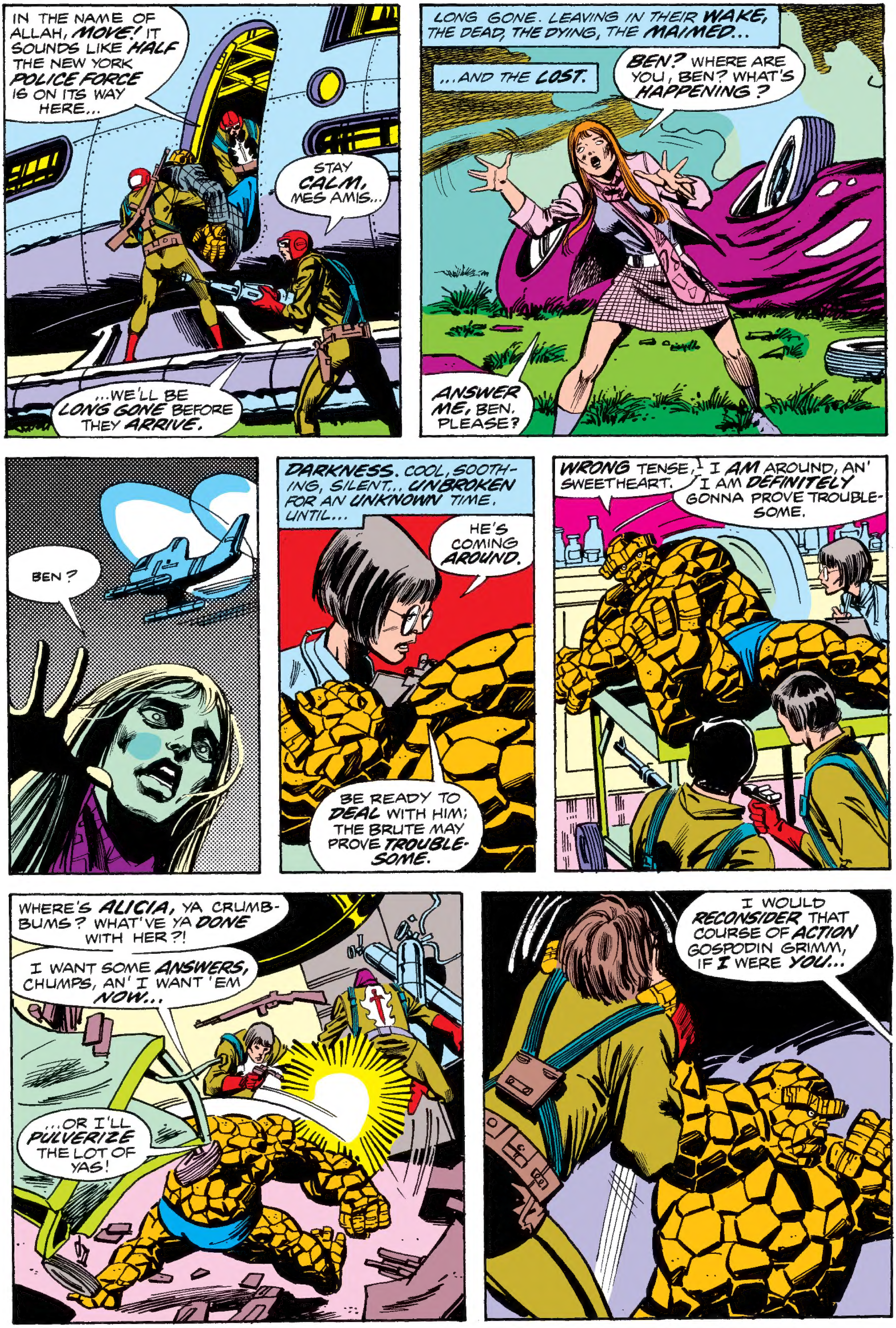

IT'S SUNDAY IN NEW YORK AND THE SUN STANDS HIGH AND WARM IN A CLEAN, AZURE SKY, THE AIR SWEET WITH THE HEADY WINE OF SPRING...
SCREEEEEEEEE
IT'S A DAY FOR PLAYING HOOKEY, FOR SHOOTING FRISBEES IN THE PARK, AND WALKING WITH YOUR LADY-LOVE...
IN SHORT, IT'S A GRAND AND GLORIOUS DAY TO BE ALIVE.
POLICE L
T CROSS
IS THIS THE DAY THE WORLD ENDS?

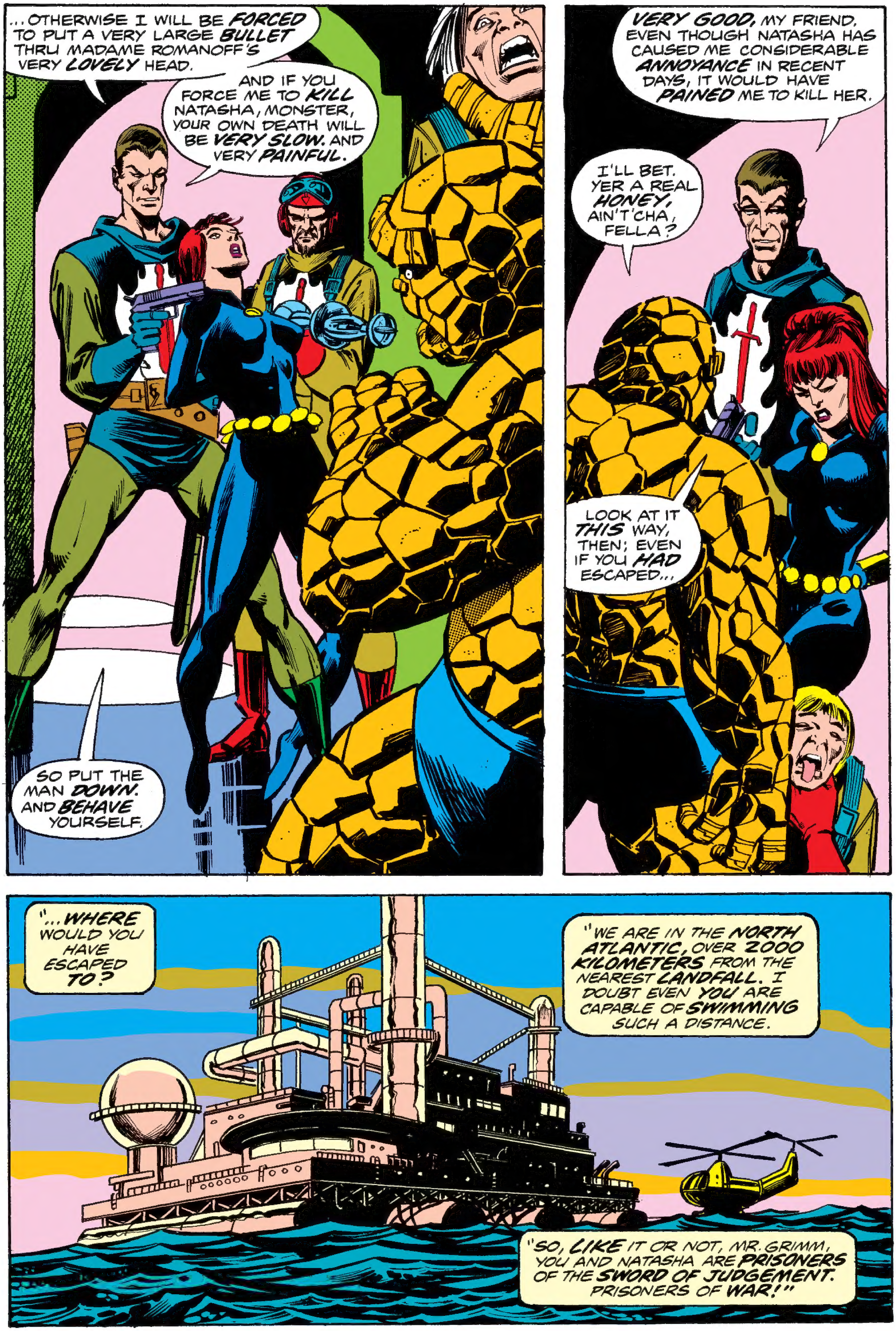
CHRIS CLAREMONT, AUTHOR * BOB BROWN, ARTIST * KLAUS JANSON, INKER * JOHN COSTANZA, letterer, KLAUS JANSON, colorist * LEN WEIN, EDITOR

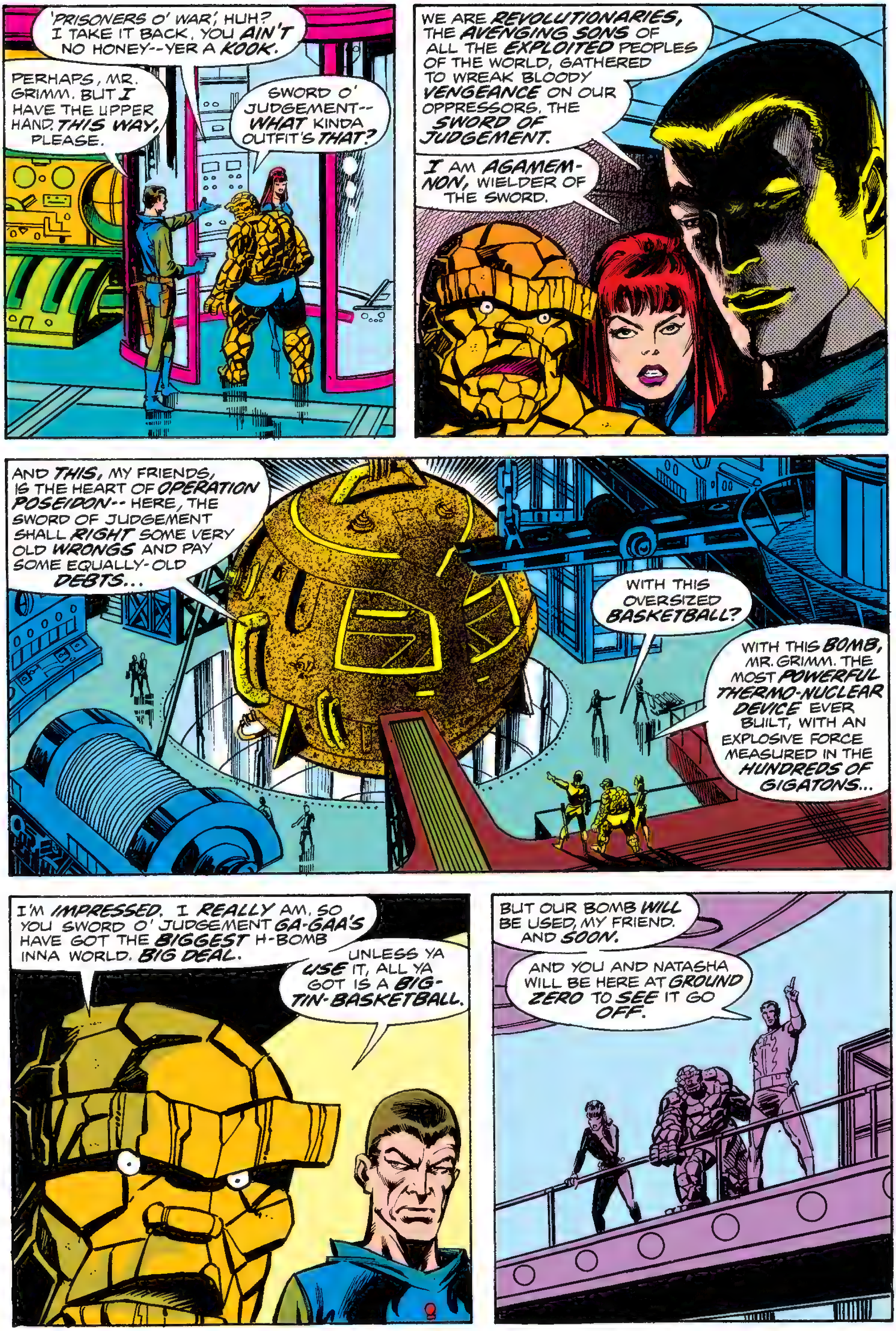

IT'S MADNESS--ONE MOMENT, CENTRAL PARK DRIVE IS CALM, PEACEFUL, THICK WITH PEDESTRIANS AND WEEKEND CYCLISTS...
...THE NEXT, IT'S A MASS OF SNARLING ENGINES AND FLYING LEAD, PEOPLE SCREAMING IN TERROR AS THEY SCRAMBLE TO GET OUT OF THE WAY...
SOME DON'T MAKE IT.
A LITTLE FACT WHICH DOES NOT GO UNNOTICED BY...
THE POLICE! MOVING TO CUT ME OFF!
BUT I CAN'T BE STOPPED! I WON'T BE STOPPED. NOT NOW. NOT WHEN I'M THIS CLOSE...
A TWIST OF THE WHEEL AND THE TINY SPORTS CAR IS OFF THE DRIVE AND TEARING ACROSS THE SHEEP MEADOW, DODGING TREES AND PICNICKERS WITH EQUAL EASE...
...AND THRU IT ALL, MADAME NATASHA ROMANOFF IS AS COOL AS ICE. SHE HAS TO BE.
BECAUSE THERE'S NOTHING PRETTY ABOUT THE WORLD THE BLACK WIDOW LIVES IN, A BRUTAL, MERCILESS WORLD WHERE THE INNOCENT DIE AS EASILY AS THE GUILTY.
IT'S A FACT OF LIFE. YOU LEARN TO LIVE WITH IT--OR YOU DIE YOURSELF.
AND THE WIDOW'S NOT READY TO DO THAT YET.
SHE'S LUCKY. AT LEAST, SHE HAS SOME CHOICE IN THE MATTER.
BLAST YOU, YOUSSEF, HOLD THE CAR STEADY!
THE GENDARMES ARE GETTING TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT!
Z-Z-FWHUMP!
GOT HIM!

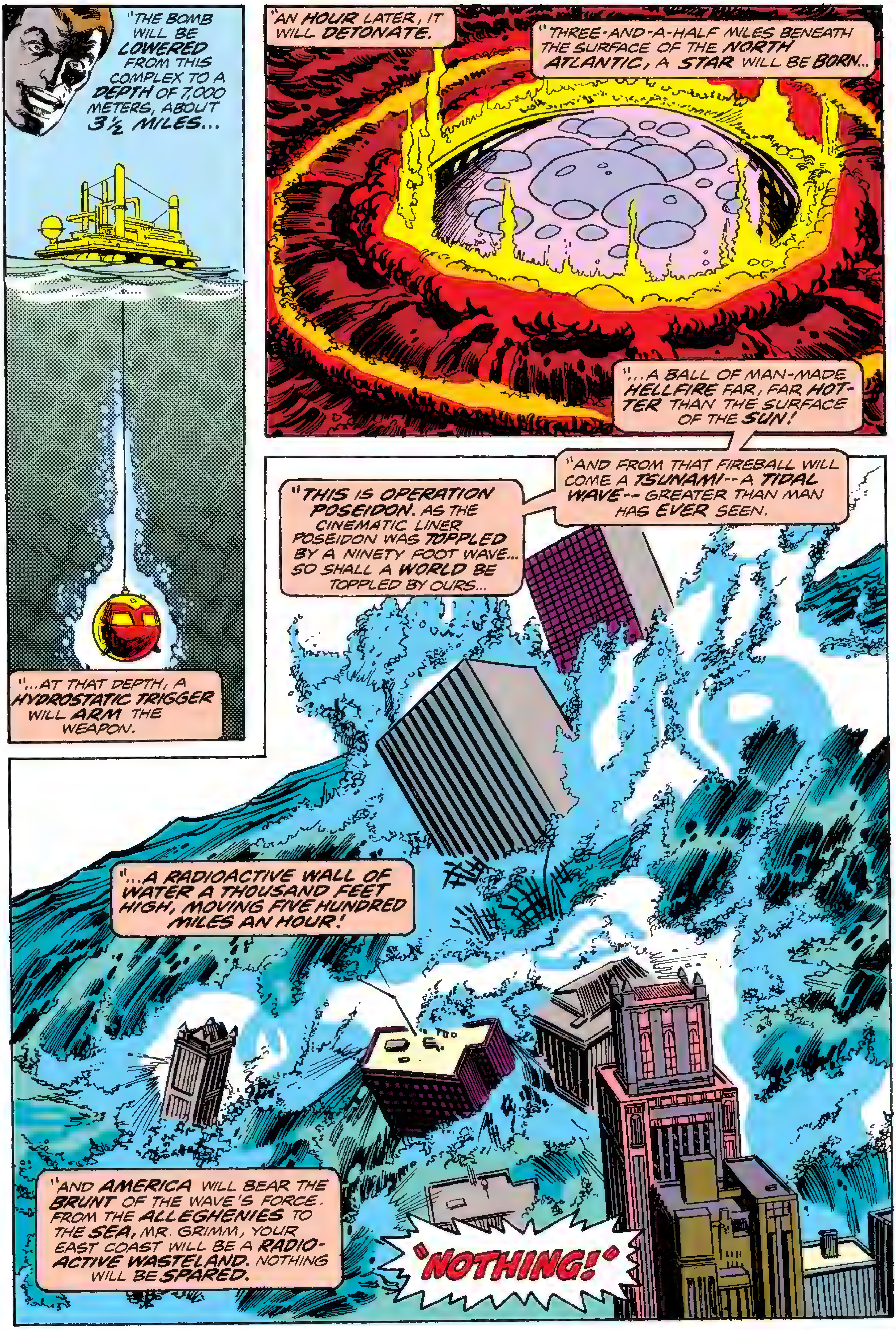

BUT LIKE WE SAID, IT'S SUNDAY IN THE PARK, A DAY FOR WALKIN' WITH YOUR LADY-LOVE. CASE-IN-POINT: BENJAMIN J. GRIMM AND ALICIA MASTERS.
I TELL YA, ALICIA THIS IS A DAY IN A MILLION...
I KNOW BEN, I CAN FEEL...
BEN, IS SOMETHING WRONG? YOU'VE GONE ALL TENSE.
I AIN'T SURE, ALICIA. BUT IF I DIDN'T KNOW BETTER, I'D SAY PHIL D'ANTONI WAS BACK IN TOWN, SHOOTIN' FRENCH CONNECTION III.
CARS, ALICIA, HEADIN' OUR WAY! AN' FAST!
LORD, NO! THAT COUPLE-- THEY'RE IN MY WAY!
AND I CAN'T SWERVE AROUND THEM-- THE TREES ARE TOO THICK!
IN DESPERATION, NATASHA HITS WHEEL AND CLUTCH TOGETHER, THE CAR SLEWING INTO A TIGHT, SICKENING CURVE...
...BUT THERE'S SO LITTLE ROOM.
BEEENNNN!
GOTTA THROW ALICIA OUTA THE WAY! GOTTA--
TOO LITTLE ROOM!
PUHM!

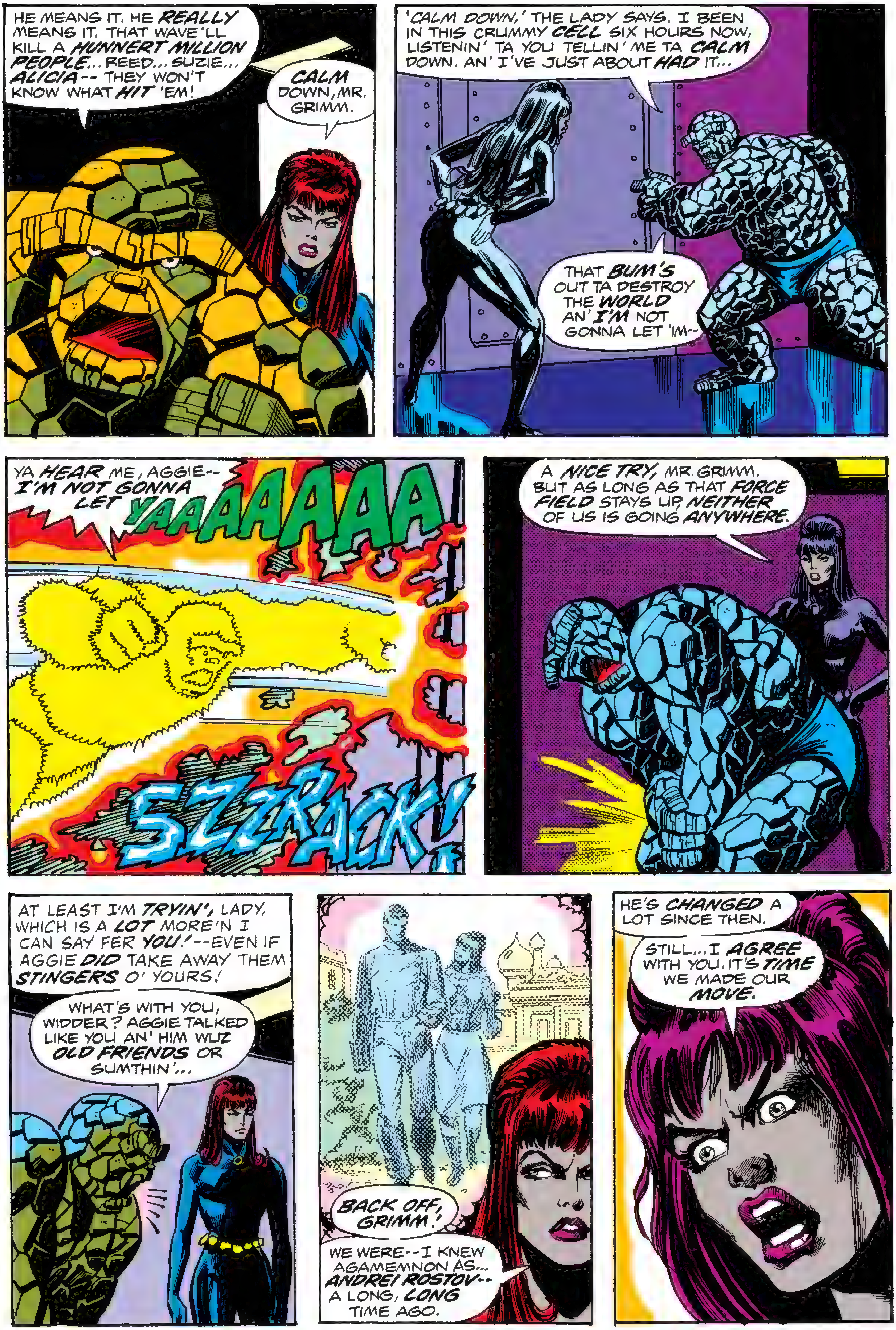

SCKRAAK!
IT'S THE THING--I HIT THE THING! MUST GET TO HIM. FANTASTIC FOUR WILL... HELP...
...SO GROGGY... HEAD HURTS FROM CRASH... BUT MUST CALL... SHIELD... WARN THEM...
HE'S... ALIVE. THANK GOD.
FREEZE, WOMAN!
SURRENDER TO GUTTER-FILTH LIKE YOU--?
NEVER!
YOU DON'T REALLY HAVE MUCH CHOICE, WIDOW.
ZAM!
SECURITY. HE'S A MEMBER OF THE CURSED FANTASTIC FOUR. THE WIDOW MAY HAVE SLIPPED HIM INFORMATION ON OPERATION POSEIDON, AND WE DAREN'T TAKE ANY CHANCES, ESPECIALLY THIS CLOSE TO H-HOUR.
HERE COMES THE PICK-UP CHOPPER, ACHMED. RIGHT ON CUE.
BUT WHAT'RE WE BRINGIN' THAT GARGOYLE WITH US FOR?

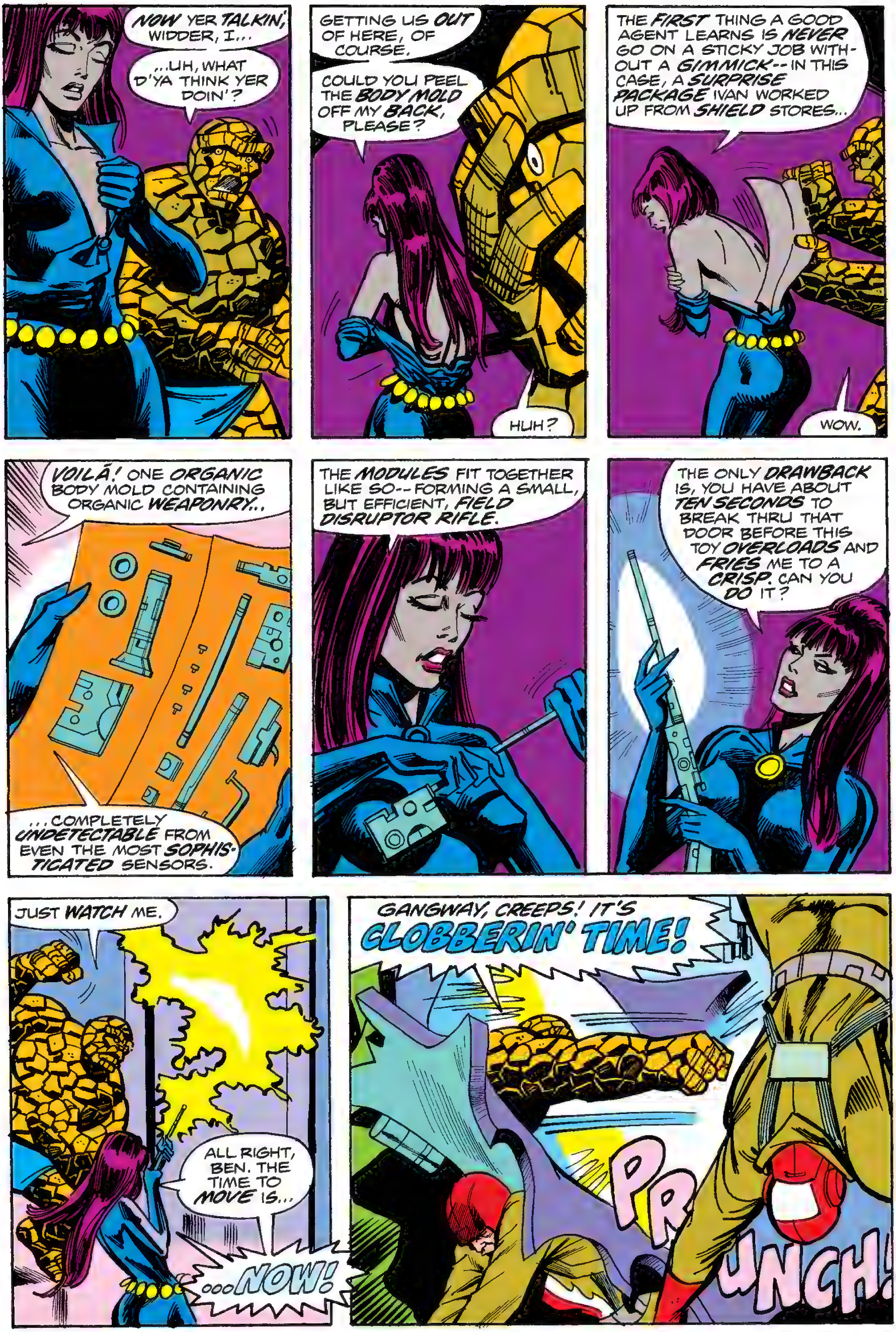

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, MOVE! IT SOUNDS LIKE HALF THE NEW YORK POLICE FORCE IS ON ITS WAY HERE...
STAY CALM, MES AMIS...
...WE'LL BE LONG GONE BEFORE THEY ARRIVE.
LONG GONE. LEAVING IN THEIR WAKE, THE DEAD, THE DYING, THE MAIMED...
...AND THE LOST.
BEN? WHERE ARE YOU, BEN? WHAT'S HAPPENING?
ANSWER ME, BEN. PLEASE?
BEN?
DARKNESS. COOL, SOOTHING, SILENT... UNBROKEN FOR AN UNKNOWN TIME. UNTIL...
HE'S COMING AROUND.
BE READY TO DEAL WITH HIM; THE BRUTE MAY PROVE TROUBLESOME.
WRONG TENSE, SWEETHEART.
I AM AROUND, AN' I AM DEFINITELY GONNA PROVE TROUBLESOME.
WHERE'S ALICIA, YA CRUMBBUMS? WHAT'VE YA DONE WITH HER?!
I WANT SOME ANSWERS, CHUMPS, AN' I WANT 'EM NOW...
...OR I'LL PULVERIZE THE LOT OF YAS!
I WOULD RECONSIDER THAT COURSE OF ACTION GOSPODIN GRIMM, IF I WERE YOU...

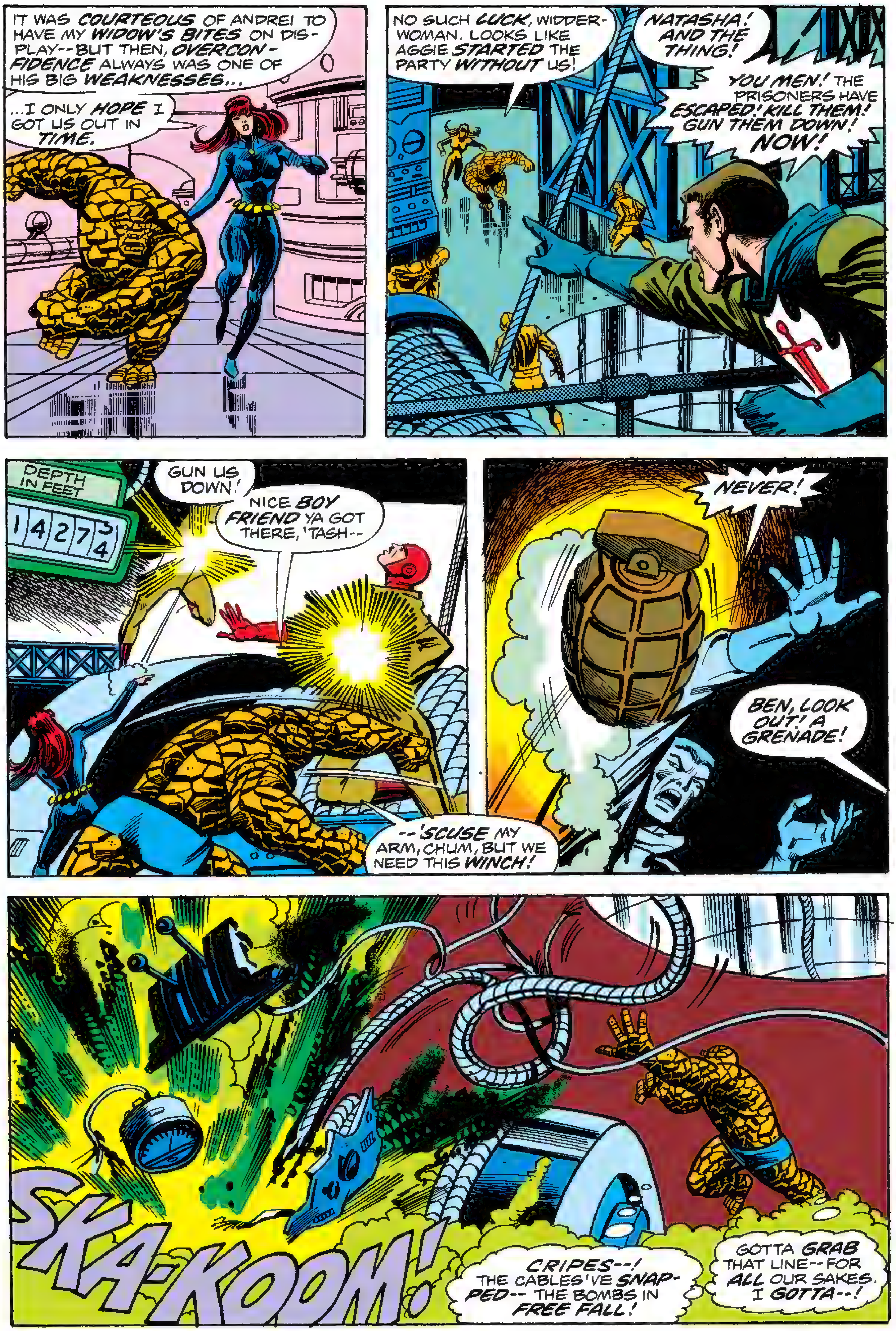

...OTHERWISE I WILL BE *FORCED* TO PUT A VERY LARGE *BULLET* THRU MADAME ROMANOFF'S VERY *LOVELY* HEAD.
AND IF YOU FORCE ME TO *KILL* NATASHA, MONSTER, YOUR OWN DEATH WILL BE *VERY SLOW.* AND VERY *PAINFUL.*
SO PUT THE MAN *DOWN.* AND *BEHAVE* YOURSELF.
VERY GOOD, MY FRIEND. EVEN THOUGH NATASHA HAS CAUSED ME CONSIDERABLE *ANNOYANCE* IN RECENT DAYS, IT WOULD HAVE *PAINED* ME TO KILL HER.
I'LL BET. YER A REAL *HONEY,* AIN'T'CHA, FELLA?
LOOK AT IT *THIS* WAY, THEN; EVEN IF YOU *HAD* ESCAPED...
"...*WHERE* WOULD YOU HAVE ESCAPED *TO?*
"WE ARE IN THE *NORTH ATLANTIC,* OVER *2000 KILOMETERS* FROM THE NEAREST *LANDFALL.* I DOUBT EVEN *YOU* ARE CAPABLE OF *SWIMMING* SUCH A DISTANCE.
"SO, *LIKE* IT OR NOT, MR. GRIMM, YOU AND NATASHA ARE *PRISONERS* OF THE *SWORD OF JUDGEMENT.* PRISONERS OF *WAR!"*

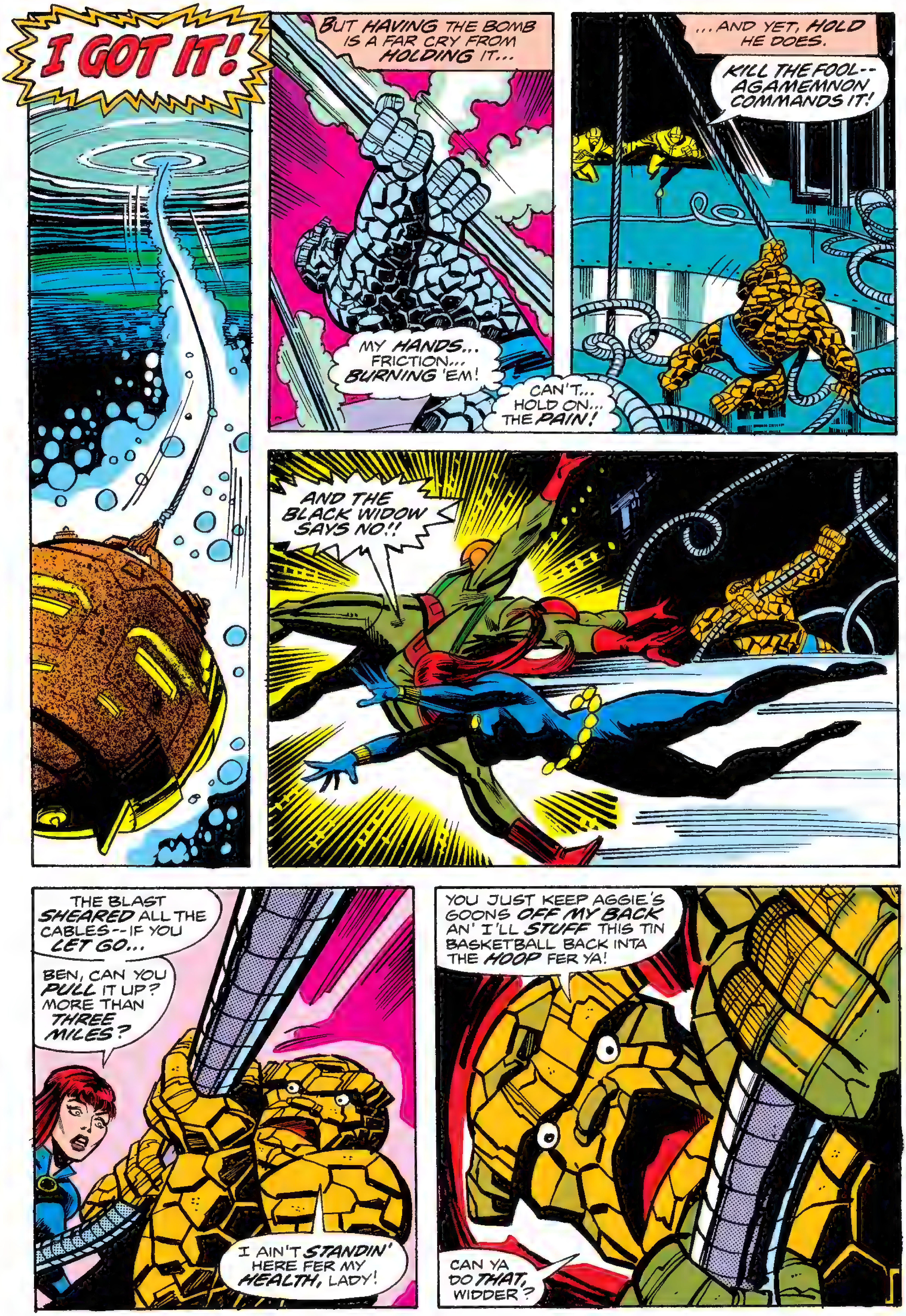

'PRISONERS O' WAR,' HUH? I TAKE IT BACK, YOU *AIN'T* NO HONEY--YER A *KOOK.*
PERHAPS, MR. GRIMM. BUT *I* HAVE THE UPPER HAND. *THIS WAY,* PLEASE.
SWORD O' JUDGEMENT-- *WHAT* KINDA OUTFIT'S *THAT?*
WE ARE *REVOLUTIONARIES,* THE *AVENGING SONS* OF ALL THE *EXPLOITED* PEOPLES OF THE WORLD, GATHERED TO WREAK BLOODY *VENGEANCE* ON OUR OPPRESSORS, THE *SWORD OF JUDGEMENT.*
I AM *AGAMEMNON,* WIELDER OF THE SWORD.
AND *THIS,* MY FRIENDS, IS THE HEART OF *OPERATION POSEIDON--* HERE, THE SWORD OF JUDGEMENT SHALL *RIGHT* SOME VERY OLD *WRONGS* AND PAY SOME EQUALLY-OLD *DEBTS...*
WITH THIS OVERSIZED *BASKETBALL?*
WITH THIS *BOMB,* MR. GRIMM. THE MOST *POWERFUL THERMO-NUCLEAR DEVICE* EVER BUILT, WITH AN EXPLOSIVE FORCE MEASURED IN THE *HUNDREDS OF GIGATONS...*
I'M *IMPRESSED.* I *REALLY* AM. SO YOU SWORD O' JUDGEMENT *GA-GAA'S* HAVE GOT THE *BIGGEST* H-BOMB INNA WORLD. *BIG DEAL.*
UNLESS YA *USE* IT, ALL YA GOT IS A *BIG-TIN-BASKETBALL.*
BUT OUR BOMB *WILL* BE USED, MY FRIEND. AND *SOON.*
AND YOU AND NATASHA WILL BE HERE AT *GROUND ZERO* TO *SEE* IT GO *OFF.*

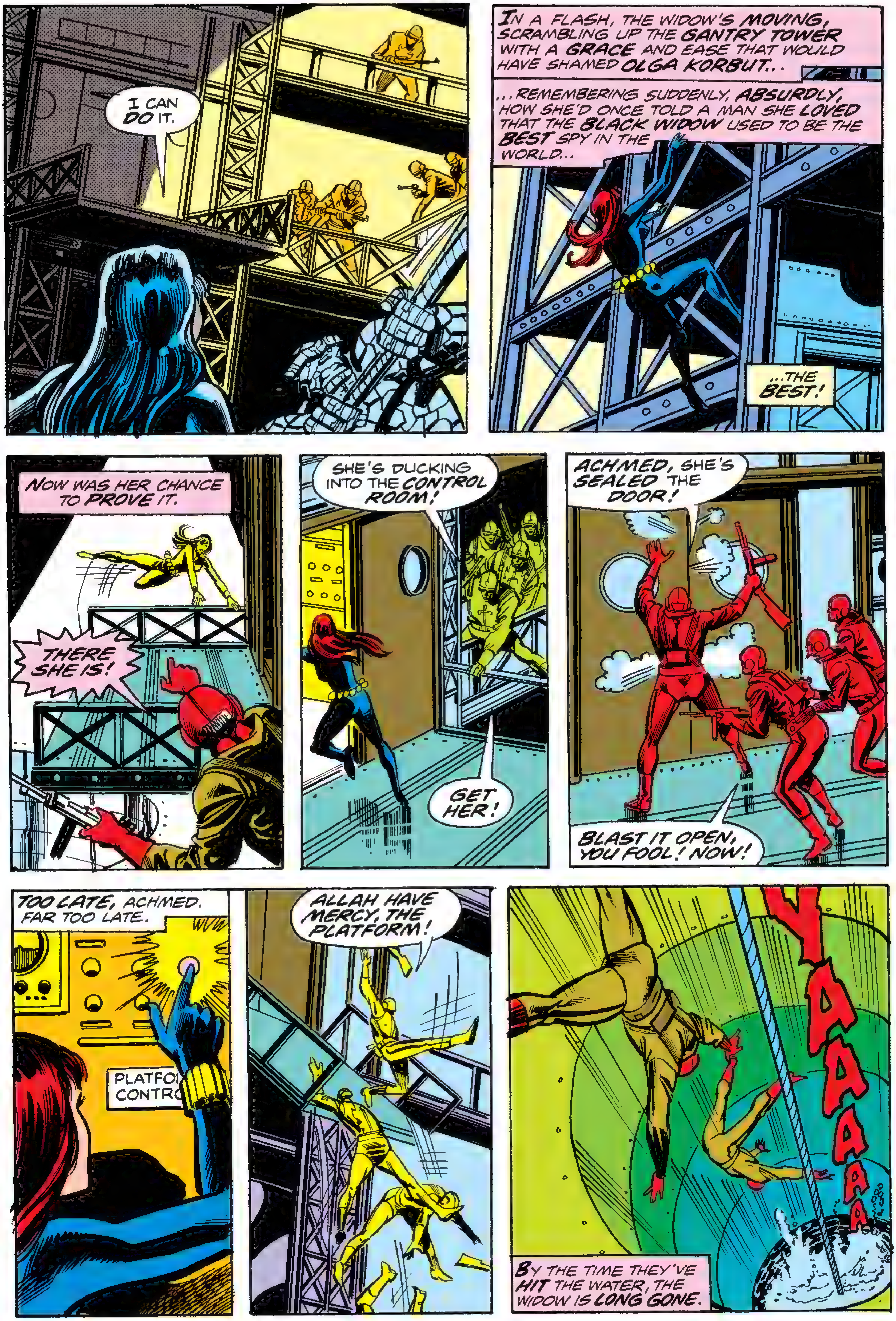

"THE BOMB WILL BE LOWERED FROM THIS COMPLEX TO A DEPTH OF 7,000 METERS, ABOUT 3½ MILES...
"...AT THAT DEPTH, A HYDROSTATIC TRIGGER WILL ARM THE WEAPON.
"AN HOUR LATER, IT WILL DETONATE.
"THREE-AND-A-HALF MILES BENEATH THE SURFACE OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC, A STAR WILL BE BORN...
"...A BALL OF MAN-MADE HELLFIRE FAR, FAR HOTTER THAN THE SURFACE OF THE SUN!
"AND FROM THAT FIREBALL WILL COME A TSUNAMI -- A TIDAL WAVE -- GREATER THAN MAN HAS EVER SEEN.
"THIS IS OPERATION POSEIDON. AS THE CINEMATIC LINER POSEIDON WAS TOPPLED BY A NINETY FOOT WAVE... SO SHALL A WORLD BE TOPPLED BY OURS...
"...A RADIOACTIVE WALL OF WATER A THOUSAND FEET HIGH, MOVING FIVE HUNDRED MILES AN HOUR!
"AND AMERICA WILL BEAR THE BRUNT OF THE WAVE'S FORCE. FROM THE ALLEGHENIES TO THE SEA, MR. GRIMM, YOUR EAST COAST WILL BE A RADIOACTIVE WASTELAND. NOTHING WILL BE SPARED.
"NOTHING!"

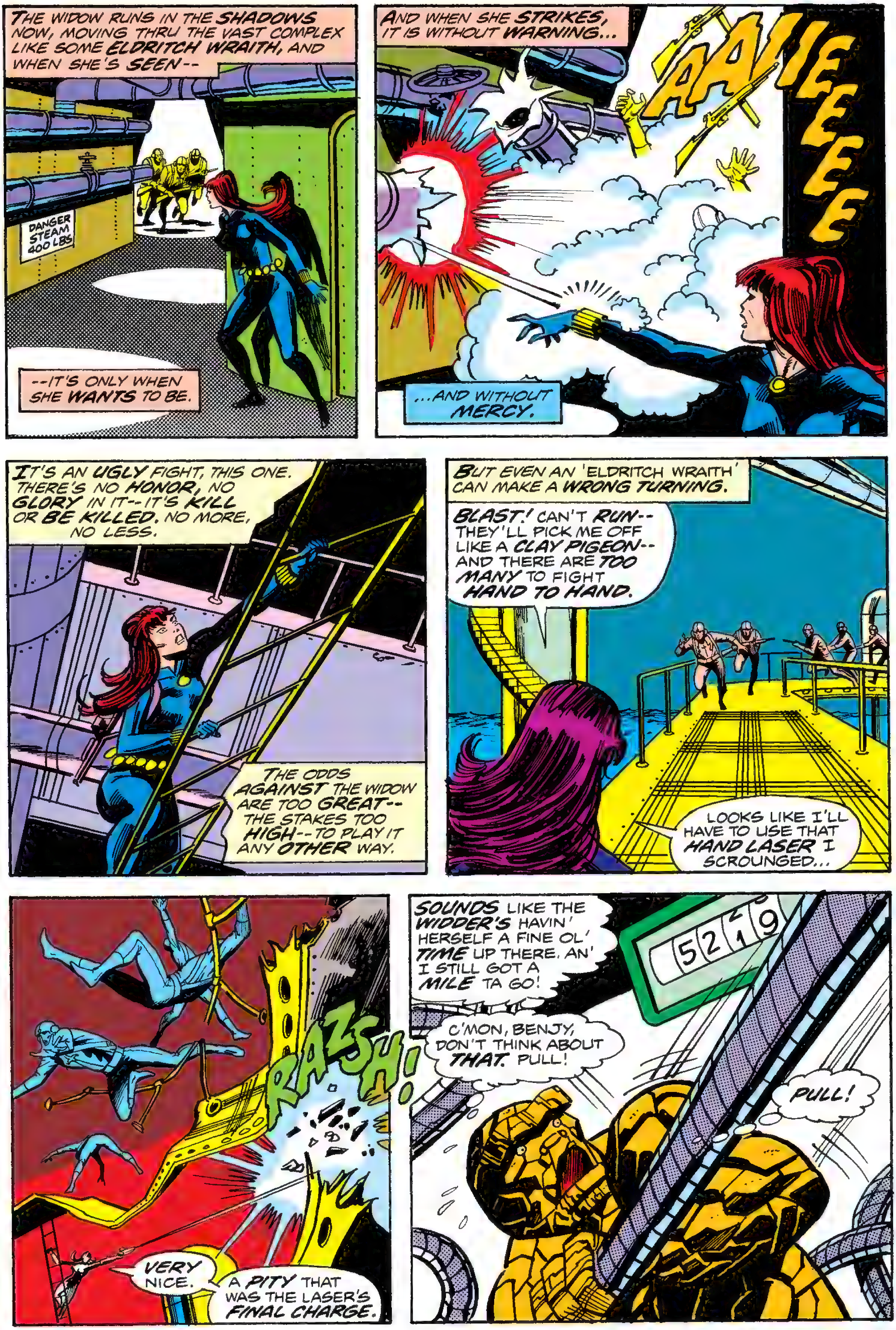

HE MEANS IT. HE REALLY MEANS IT. THAT WAVE'LL KILL A HUNNERT MILLION PEOPLE... REED... SUZIE... ALICIA -- THEY WON'T KNOW WHAT HIT 'EM!
CALM DOWN, MR. GRIMM.
'CALM DOWN,' THE LADY SAYS. I BEEN IN THIS CRUMMY CELL SIX HOURS NOW, LISTENIN' TA YOU TELLIN' ME TA CALM DOWN. AN' I'VE JUST ABOUT HAD IT...
THAT BUM'S OUT TA DESTROY THE WORLD AN' I'M NOT GONNA LET 'IM--
YA HEAR ME, AGGIE-- I'M NOT GONNA LET YAAAAAAAA
SZZRACK!
A NICE TRY, MR. GRIMM. BUT AS LONG AS THAT FORCE FIELD STAYS UP, NEITHER OF US IS GOING ANYWHERE.
AT LEAST I'M TRYIN', LADY, WHICH IS A LOT MORE'N I CAN SAY FER YOU! --EVEN IF AGGIE DID TAKE AWAY THEM STINGERS O' YOURS!
WHAT'S WITH YOU, WIDDER? AGGIE TALKED LIKE YOU AN' HIM WUZ OLD FRIENDS OR SUMTHIN'...
BACK OFF, GRIMM!
WE WERE--I KNEW AGAMEMNON AS... ANDREI ROSTOV-- A LONG, LONG TIME AGO.
HE'S CHANGED A LOT SINCE THEN.
STILL... I AGREE WITH YOU. IT'S TIME WE MADE OUR MOVE.

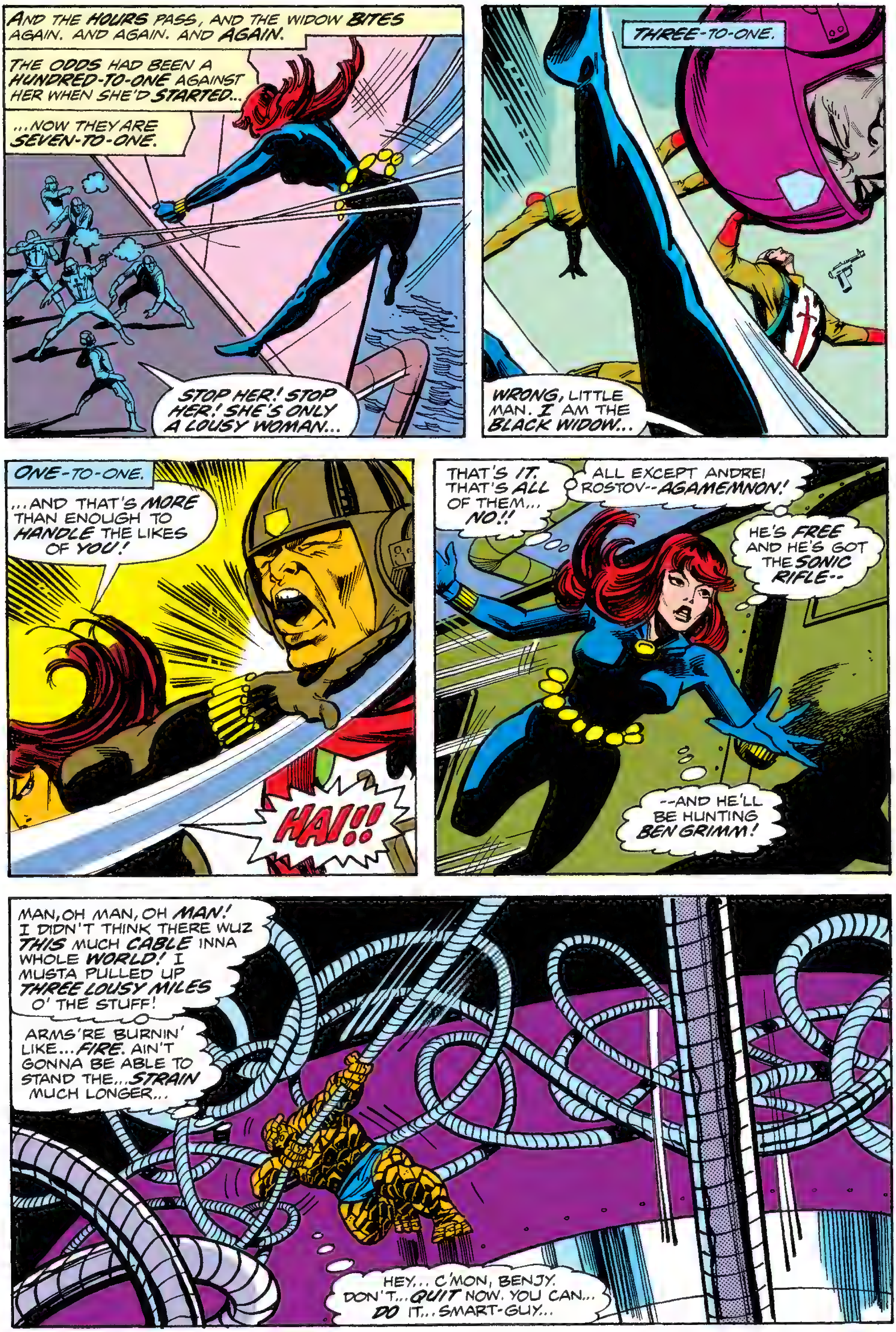

NOW YER TALKIN', WIDDER, I...
...UH, WHAT D'YA THINK YER DOIN'?
GETTING US OUT OF HERE, OF COURSE.
COULD YOU PEEL THE BODY MOLD OFF MY BACK, PLEASE?
HUH?
THE FIRST THING A GOOD AGENT LEARNS IS NEVER GO ON A STICKY JOB WITHOUT A GIMMICK-- IN THIS CASE, A SURPRISE PACKAGE IVAN WORKED UP FROM SHIELD STORES...
WOW.
VOILÀ! ONE ORGANIC BODY MOLD CONTAINING ORGANIC WEAPONRY...
...COMPLETELY UNDETECTABLE FROM EVEN THE MOST SOPHISTICATED SENSORS.
THE MODULES FIT TOGETHER LIKE SO-- FORMING A SMALL, BUT EFFICIENT, FIELD DISRUPTOR RIFLE.
THE ONLY DRAWBACK IS, YOU HAVE ABOUT TEN SECONDS TO BREAK THRU THAT DOOR BEFORE THIS TOY OVERLOADS AND FRIES ME TO A CRISP. CAN YOU DO IT?
JUST WATCH ME.
ALL RIGHT, BEN. THE TIME TO MOVE IS...
...NOW!
GANGWAY, CREEPS! IT'S CLOBBERIN' TIME!
PRUNCH!

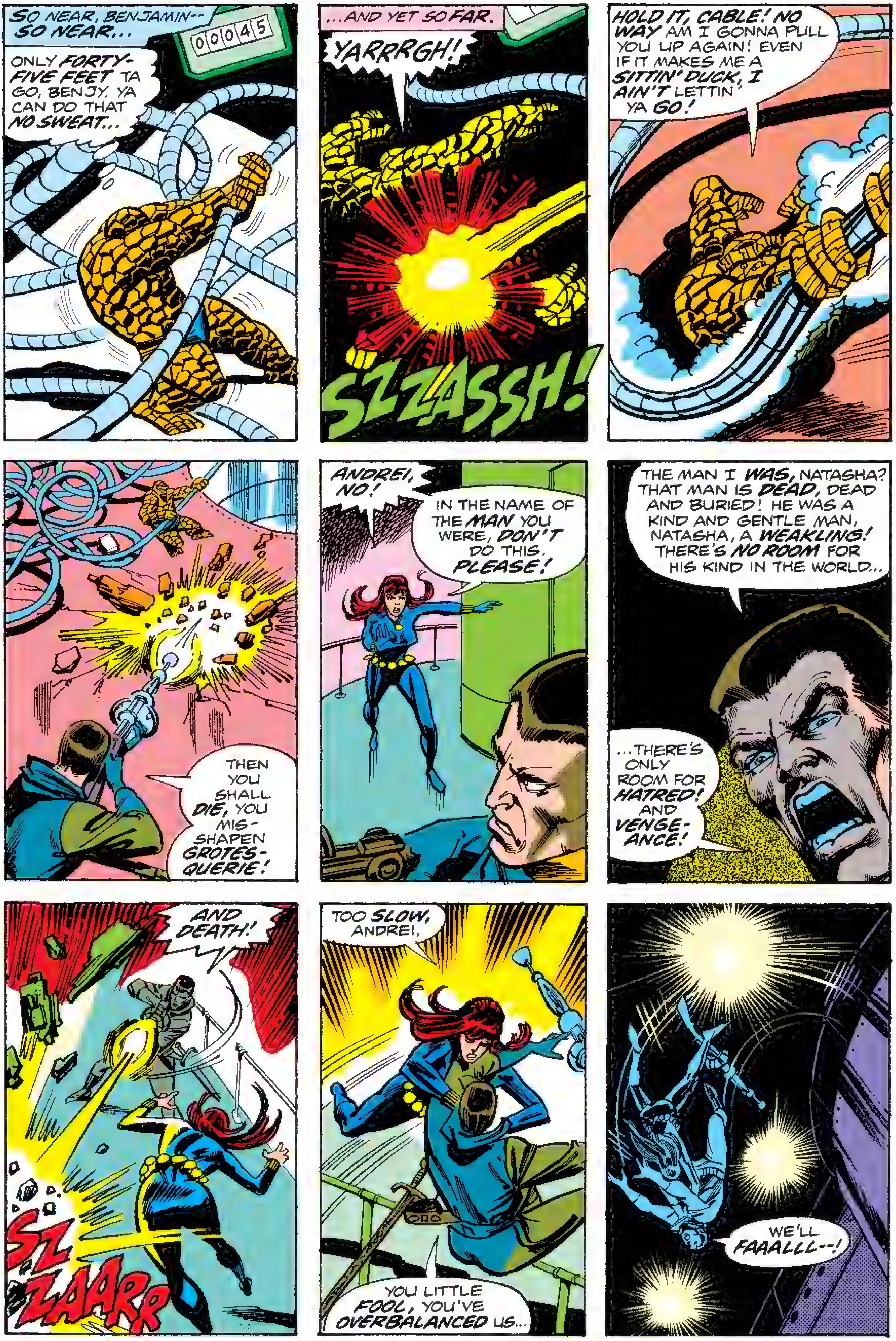

IT WAS COURTEOUS OF ANDREI TO HAVE MY WIDOW'S BITES ON DISPLAY--BUT THEN, OVERCONFIDENCE ALWAYS WAS ONE OF HIS BIG WEAKNESSES...
...I ONLY HOPE I GOT US OUT IN TIME.
NO SUCH LUCK, WIDDER-WOMAN. LOOKS LIKE AGGIE STARTED THE PARTY WITHOUT US!
NATASHA! AND THE THING!
YOU MEN! THE PRISONERS HAVE ESCAPED! KILL THEM! GUN THEM DOWN! NOW!
DEPTH IN FEET
1 4 2 7 3 4
GUN US DOWN!
NICE BOY FRIEND YA GOT THERE, 'TASH--
--'SCUSE MY ARM, CHUM, BUT WE NEED THIS WINCH!
NEVER!
BEN, LOOK OUT! A GRENADE!
SKA-KOOM!
CRIPES--! THE CABLES'VE SNAPPED-- THE BOMBS IN FREE FALL!
GOTTA GRAB THAT LINE--FOR ALL OUR SAKES. I GOTTA--!


I GOT IT!
BUT HAVING THE BOMB IS A FAR CRY FROM HOLDING IT...
MY HANDS... FRICTION... BURNING 'EM!
...AND YET, HOLD HE DOES.
KILL THE FOOL-- AGAMEMNON COMMANDS IT!
CAN'T... HOLD ON... THE PAIN!
AND THE BLACK WIDOW SAYS NO!!
THE BLAST SHEARED ALL THE CABLES--IF YOU LET GO...
BEN, CAN YOU PULL IT UP? MORE THAN THREE MILES?
I AIN'T STANDIN' HERE FER MY HEALTH, LADY!
YOU JUST KEEP AGGIE'S GOONS OFF MY BACK AN' I'LL STUFF THIS TIN BASKETBALL BACK INTA THE HOOP FER YA!
CAN YA DO THAT, WIDDER?

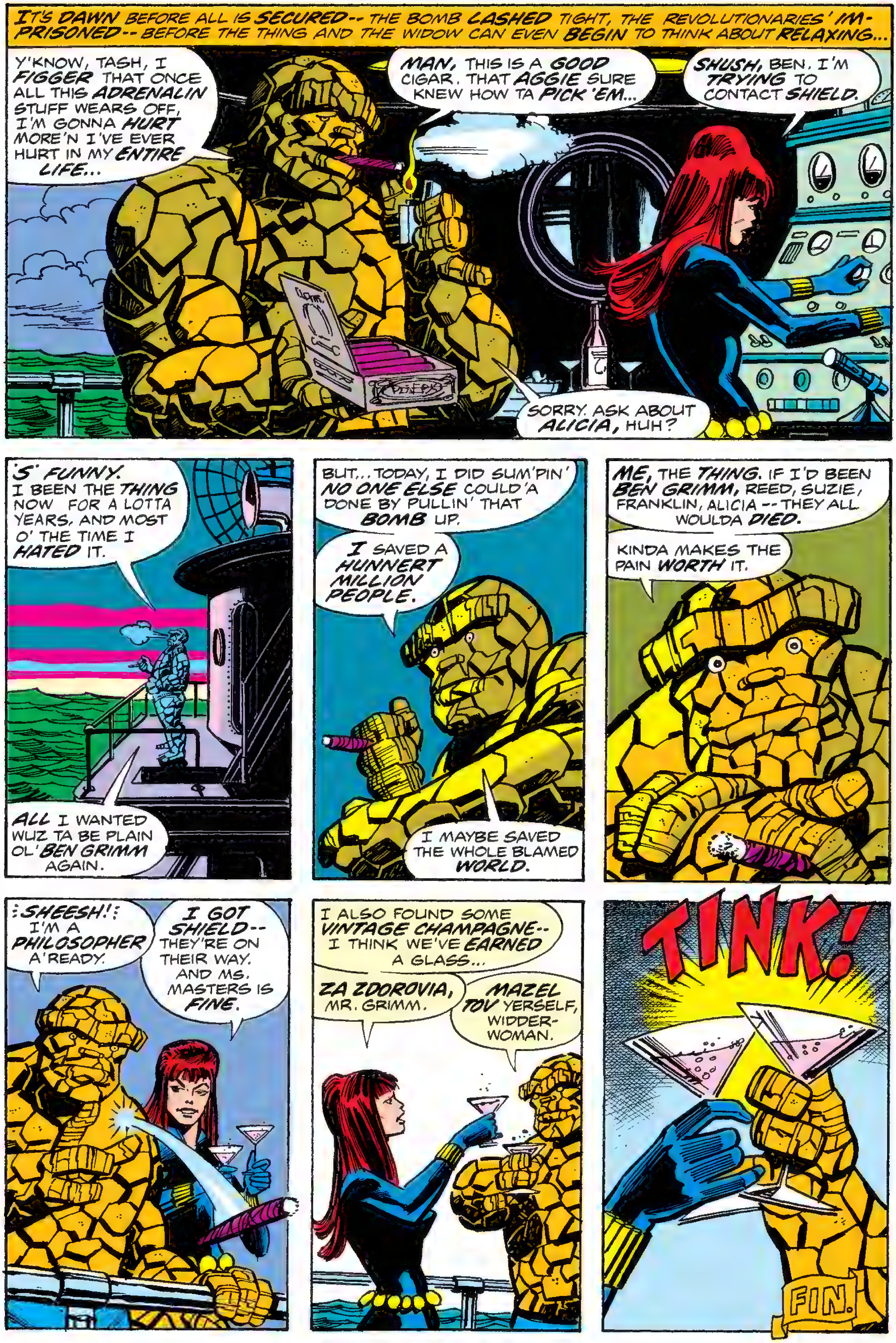

I CAN DO IT.
IN A FLASH, THE WIDOW'S MOVING, SCRAMBLING UP THE GANTRY TOWER WITH A GRACE AND EASE THAT WOULD HAVE SHAMED OLGA KORBUT...
...REMEMBERING SUDDENLY, ABSURDLY, HOW SHE'D ONCE TOLD A MAN SHE LOVED THAT THE BLACK WIDOW USED TO BE THE BEST SPY IN THE WORLD...
...THE BEST!
NOW WAS HER CHANCE TO PROVE IT.
THERE SHE IS!
SHE'S DUCKING INTO THE CONTROL ROOM!
GET HER!
ACHMED, SHE'S SEALED THE DOOR!
BLAST IT OPEN, YOU FOOL! NOW!
TOO LATE, ACHMED. FAR TOO LATE.
PLATFO
CONTRO
ALLAH HAVE MERCY, THE PLATFORM!
YAAAAA
BY THE TIME THEY'VE HIT THE WATER, THE WIDOW IS LONG GONE.


THE WIDOW RUNS IN THE SHADOWS NOW, MOVING THRU THE VAST COMPLEX LIKE SOME ELDRITCH WRAITH, AND WHEN SHE'S SEEN--
DANGER STEAM 400 LBS
--IT'S ONLY WHEN SHE WANTS TO BE.
AND WHEN SHE STRIKES, IT IS WITHOUT WARNING...
AAIIEEEE
...AND WITHOUT MERCY.
IT'S AN UGLY FIGHT, THIS ONE. THERE'S NO HONOR, NO GLORY IN IT--IT'S KILL OR BE KILLED. NO MORE, NO LESS.
THE ODDS AGAINST THE WIDOW ARE TOO GREAT--THE STAKES TOO HIGH--TO PLAY IT ANY OTHER WAY.
BUT EVEN AN 'ELDRITCH WRAITH' CAN MAKE A WRONG TURNING.
BLAST! CAN'T RUN--THEY'LL PICK ME OFF LIKE A CLAY PIGEON--AND THERE ARE TOO MANY TO FIGHT HAND TO HAND.
LOOKS LIKE I'LL HAVE TO USE THAT HAND LASER I SCROUNGED...
RAZSH!
VERY NICE.
A PITY THAT WAS THE LASER'S FINAL CHARGE.
SOUNDS LIKE THE WIDDER'S HAVIN' HERSELF A FINE OL' TIME UP THERE. AN' I STILL GOT A MILE TA GO!
5219
C'MON, BENJY, DON'T THINK ABOUT THAT. PULL!
PULL!


AND THE HOURS PASS, AND THE WIDOW BITES AGAIN. AND AGAIN. AND AGAIN.
THE ODDS HAD BEEN A HUNDRED-TO-ONE AGAINST HER WHEN SHE'D STARTED...
...NOW THEY ARE SEVEN-TO-ONE.
STOP HER! STOP HER! SHE'S ONLY A LOUSY WOMAN...
THREE-TO-ONE.
WRONG, LITTLE MAN. I AM THE BLACK WIDOW...
ONE-TO-ONE.
...AND THAT'S MORE THAN ENOUGH TO HANDLE THE LIKES OF YOU!
HAI!!
THAT'S IT. THAT'S ALL OF THEM... NO!!
ALL EXCEPT ANDREI ROSTOV--AGAMEMNON!
HE'S FREE AND HE'S GOT THE SONIC RIFLE--
--AND HE'LL BE HUNTING BEN GRIMM!
MAN, OH MAN, OH MAN! I DIDN'T THINK THERE WUZ THIS MUCH CABLE INNA WHOLE WORLD! I MUSTA PULLED UP THREE LOUSY MILES O' THE STUFF!
ARMS'RE BURNIN' LIKE... FIRE. AIN'T GONNA BE ABLE TO STAND THE... STRAIN MUCH LONGER...
HEY... C'MON, BENJY. DON'T... QUIT NOW. YOU CAN... DO IT... SMART-GUY...


SO NEAR, BENJAMIN-- SO NEAR...
00045
ONLY FORTY-FIVE FEET TA GO, BENJY, YA CAN DO THAT NO SWEAT...
...AND YET SO FAR.
YARRRGH!
SZZASSH!
HOLD IT, CABLE! NO WAY AM I GONNA PULL YOU UP AGAIN! EVEN IF IT MAKES ME A SITTIN' DUCK, I AIN'T LETTIN' YA GO!
THEN YOU SHALL DIE, YOU MISSHAPEN GROTESQUERIE!
ANDREI, NO!
IN THE NAME OF THE MAN YOU WERE, DON'T DO THIS. PLEASE!
THE MAN I WAS, NATASHA? THAT MAN IS DEAD, DEAD AND BURIED! HE WAS A KIND AND GENTLE MAN, NATASHA, A WEAKLING! THERE'S NO ROOM FOR HIS KIND IN THE WORLD...
...THERE'S ONLY ROOM FOR HATRED! AND VENGEANCE!
AND DEATH!
SZZAARR
TOO SLOW, ANDREI.
YOU LITTLE FOOL, YOU'VE OVERBALANCED US...
WE'LL FAAALLL--!

IT'S NOT THE FALLING THAT COUNTS, ANDREI. IT'S HOW YOU FALL.
ARE YOU GOING TO SHOOT ME THEN, NATASHA? CAN YOU SHOOT ME? CAN YOU!?!
CHAK!
I DIDN'T THINK SO.
I-- ON THE OTHER HAND--HAVE NO SUCH COMPUNCTIONS. I CARED FOR YOU ONCE, NATASHA, BUT NO MORE.
YOU'RE IN MY WAY, WOMAN. AND YOU MUST DIE FOR IT!
THRMMMM
I'M GLAD TA HEAR YA DON'T CARE NO MORE, AGGIE...
HMMMMMMMMM
AAAAAAAA
...'CAUSE I'D HATE TA THINK I WUZ DOIN' THIS TA SOMEONE THE WIDDER-WOMAN LIKED!


IT'S DAWN BEFORE ALL IS SECURED -- THE BOMB LASHED TIGHT, THE REVOLUTIONARIES' IMPRISONED -- BEFORE THE THING AND THE WIDOW CAN EVEN BEGIN TO THINK ABOUT RELAXING...
Y'KNOW, TASH, I FIGGER THAT ONCE ALL THIS ADRENALIN STUFF WEARS OFF, I'M GONNA HURT MORE'N I'VE EVER HURT IN MY ENTIRE LIFE...
MAN, THIS IS A GOOD CIGAR. THAT AGGIE SURE KNEW HOW TA PICK 'EM...
SHUSH, BEN. I'M TRYING TO CONTACT SHIELD.
SORRY. ASK ABOUT ALICIA, HUH?
'S FUNNY. I BEEN THE THING NOW FOR A LOTTA YEARS, AND MOST O' THE TIME I HATED IT.
ALL I WANTED WUZ TA BE PLAIN OL' BEN GRIMM AGAIN.
BUT... TODAY, I DID SUM'PIN' NO ONE ELSE COULD'A DONE BY PULLIN' THAT BOMB UP.
I SAVED A HUNNERT MILLION PEOPLE.
I MAYBE SAVED THE WHOLE BLAMED WORLD.
ME, THE THING. IF I'D BEEN BEN GRIMM, REED, SUZIE, FRANKLIN, ALICIA -- THEY ALL WOULDA DIED.
KINDA MAKES THE PAIN WORTH IT.
:SHEESH!: I'M A PHILOSOPHER A'READY.
I GOT SHIELD -- THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY. AND MS. MASTERS IS FINE.
I ALSO FOUND SOME VINTAGE CHAMPAGNE -- I THINK WE'VE EARNED A GLASS...
ZA ZDOROVIA, MR. GRIMM.
MAZEL TOV YERSELF, WIDDER-WOMAN.
TINK!
FIN.

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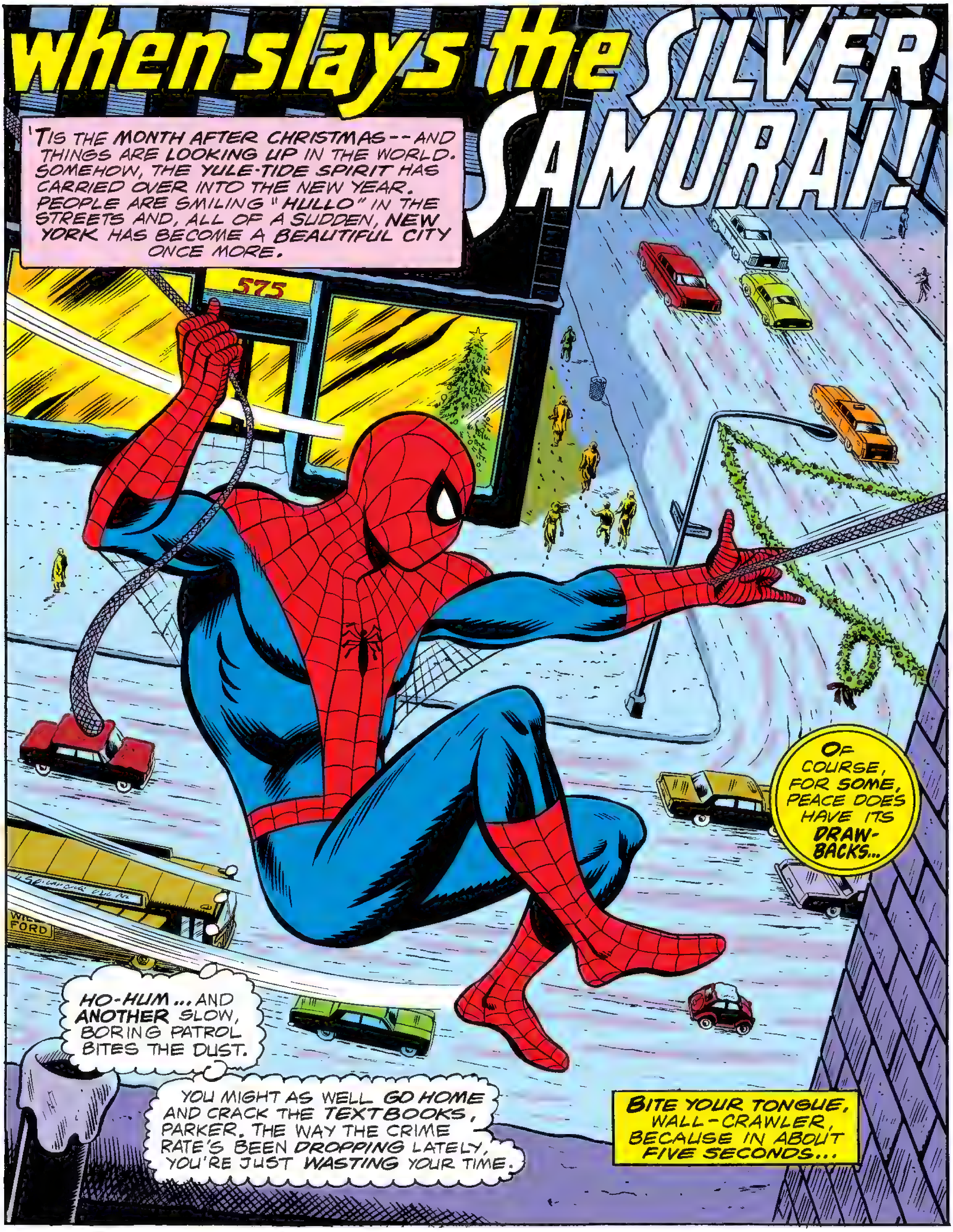
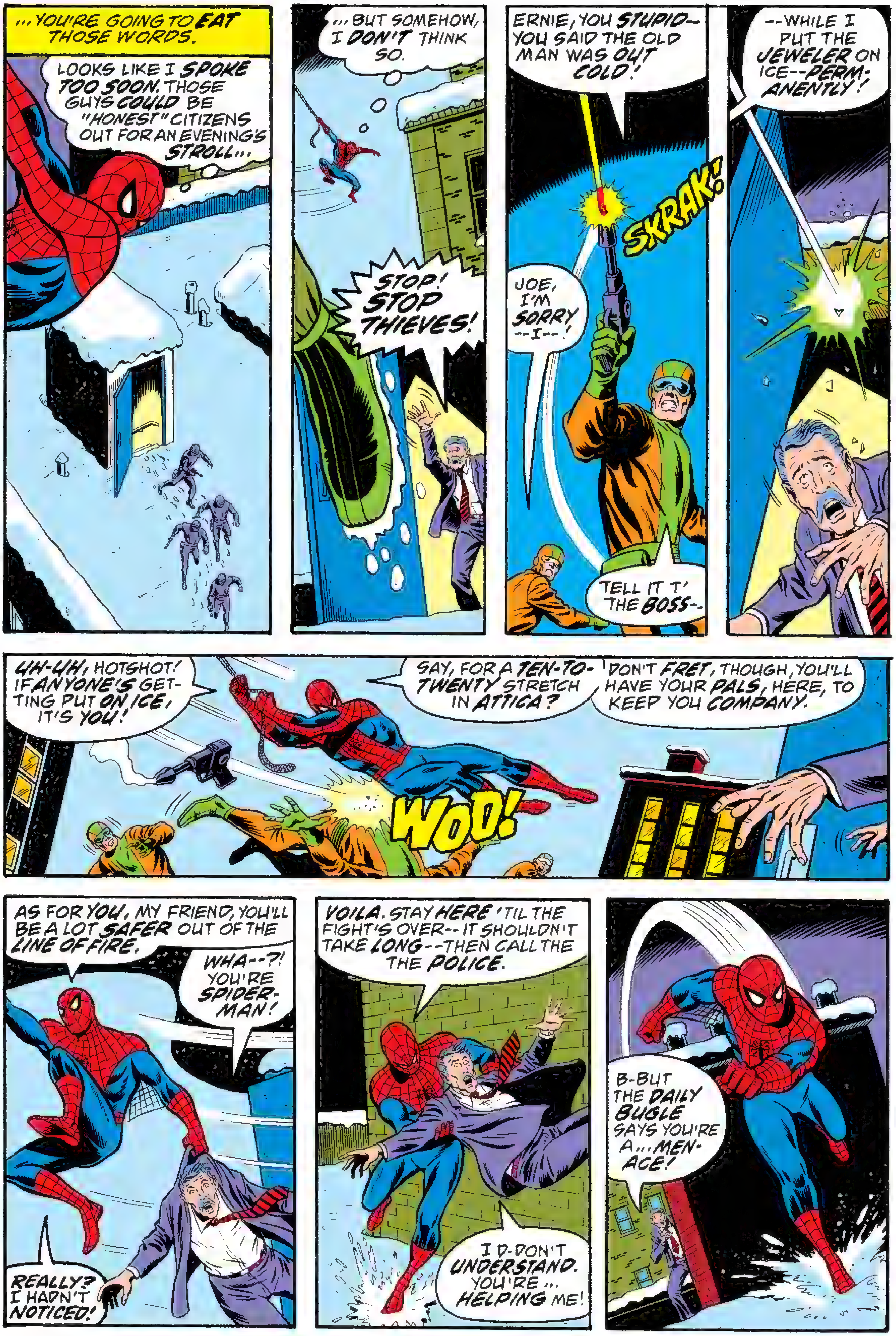
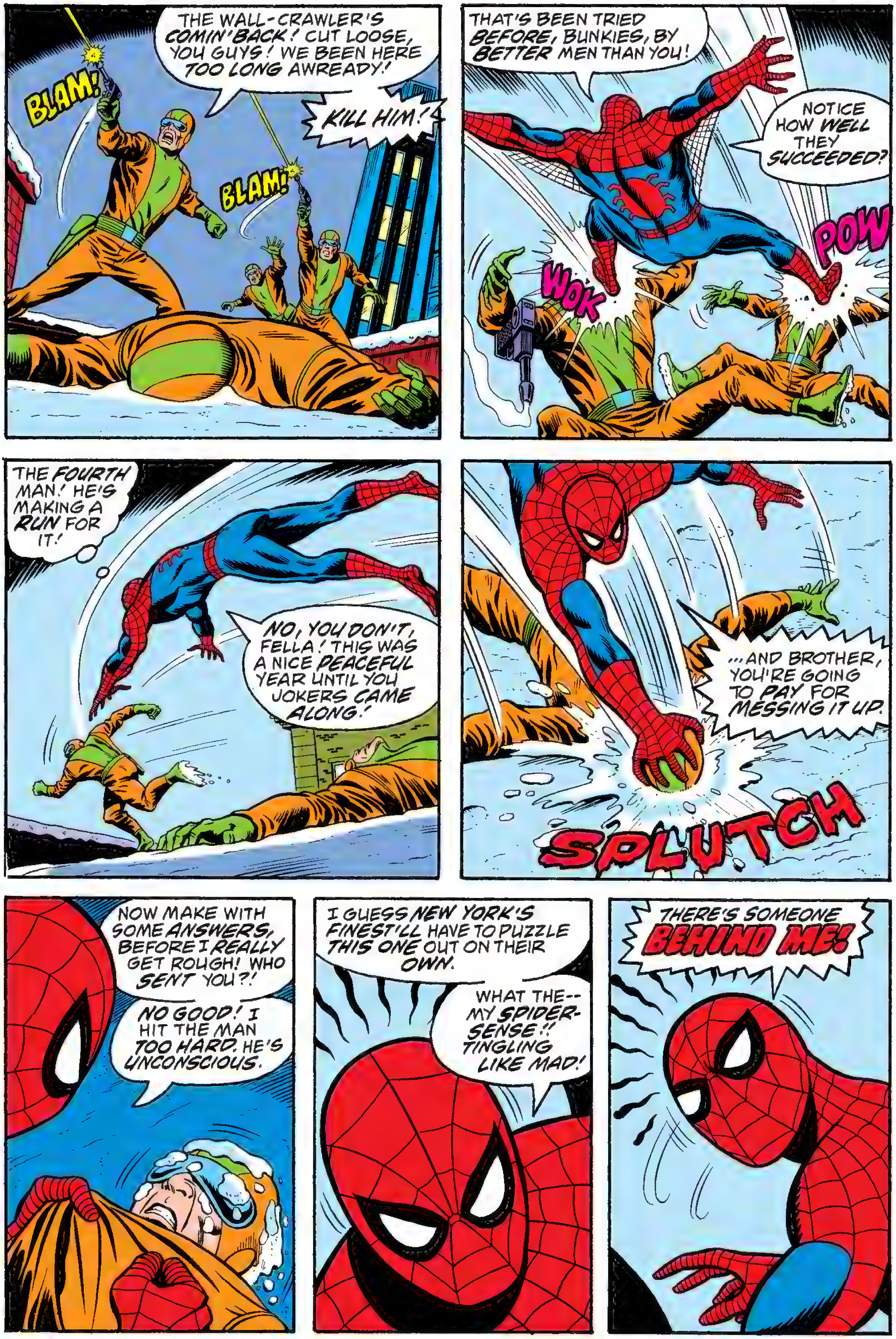
MARVEL TEAM-UP™
FEATURING
SPIDER-MAN®
AND THE
BLACK WIDOW™
WHEN SLAYS THE SILVER SAMURAI!
COCKRUM

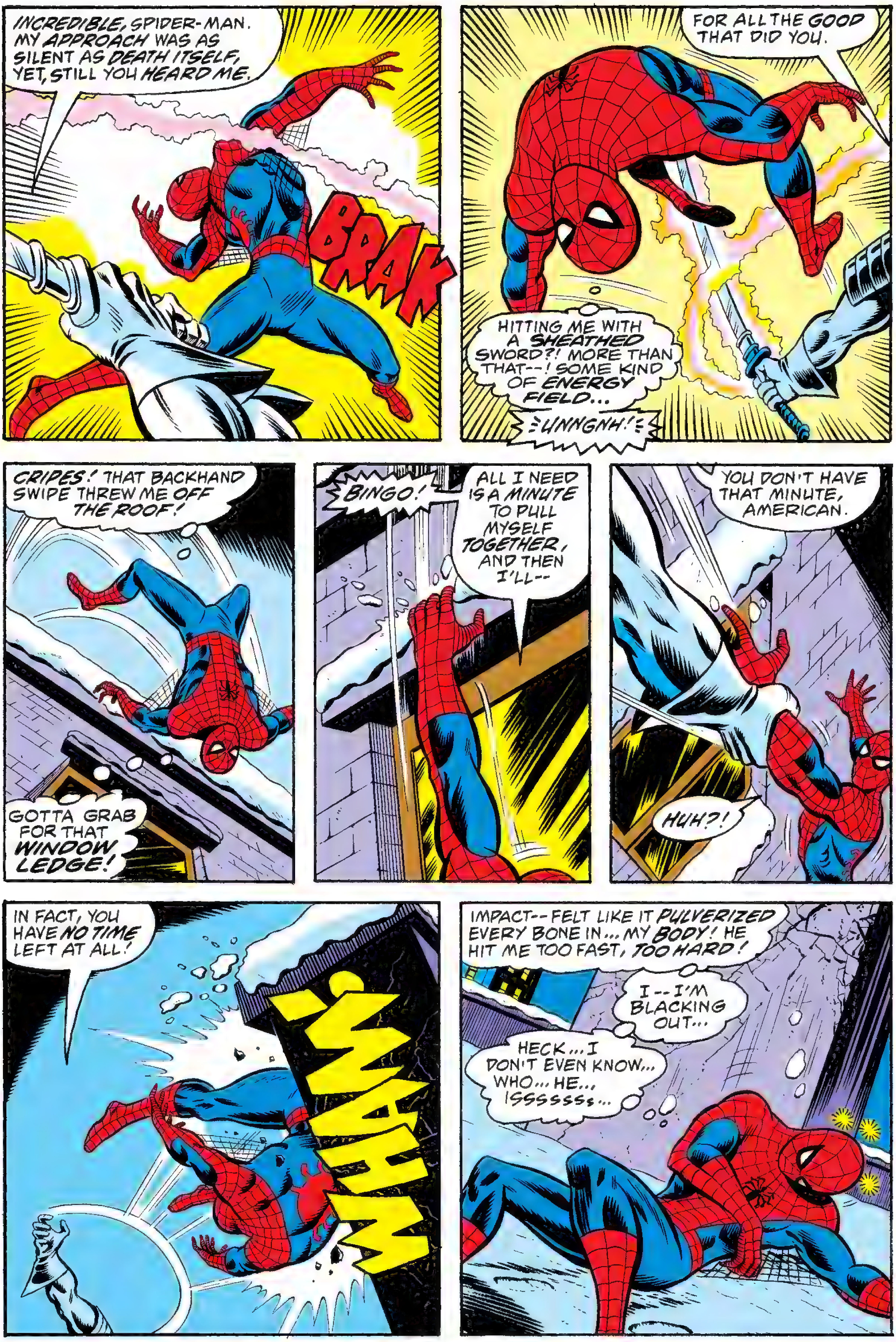
Stan Lee PRESENTS: SPIDEY AND THE BLACK WIDOW -- TOGETHER!™

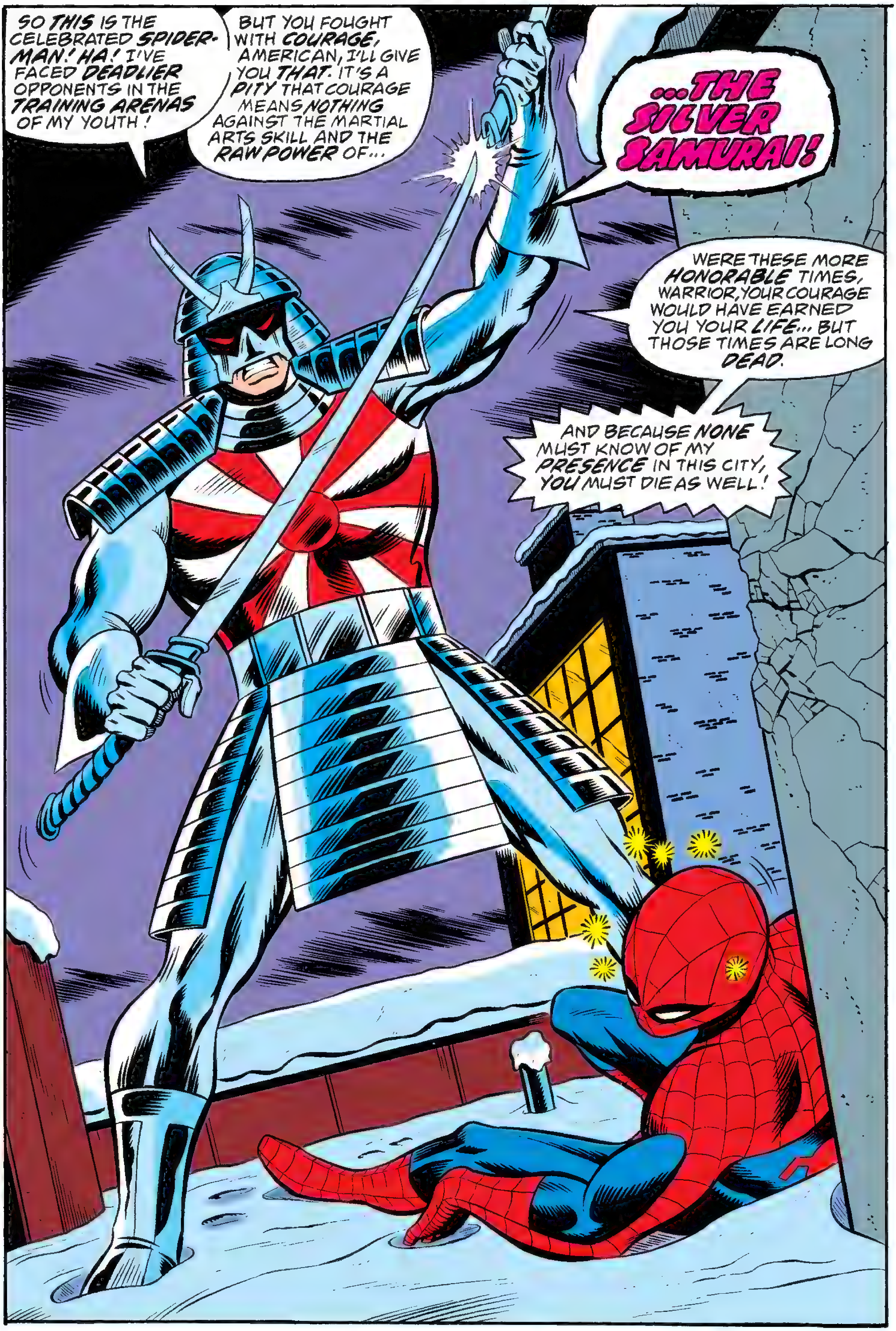
CHRIS CLAREMONT AUTHOR / SAL BUSCEMA & DAVE HUNT ARTISTS / D. WOHL LETTERER / G. ROUSSOS COLORIST / A. GOODWIN EDITOR

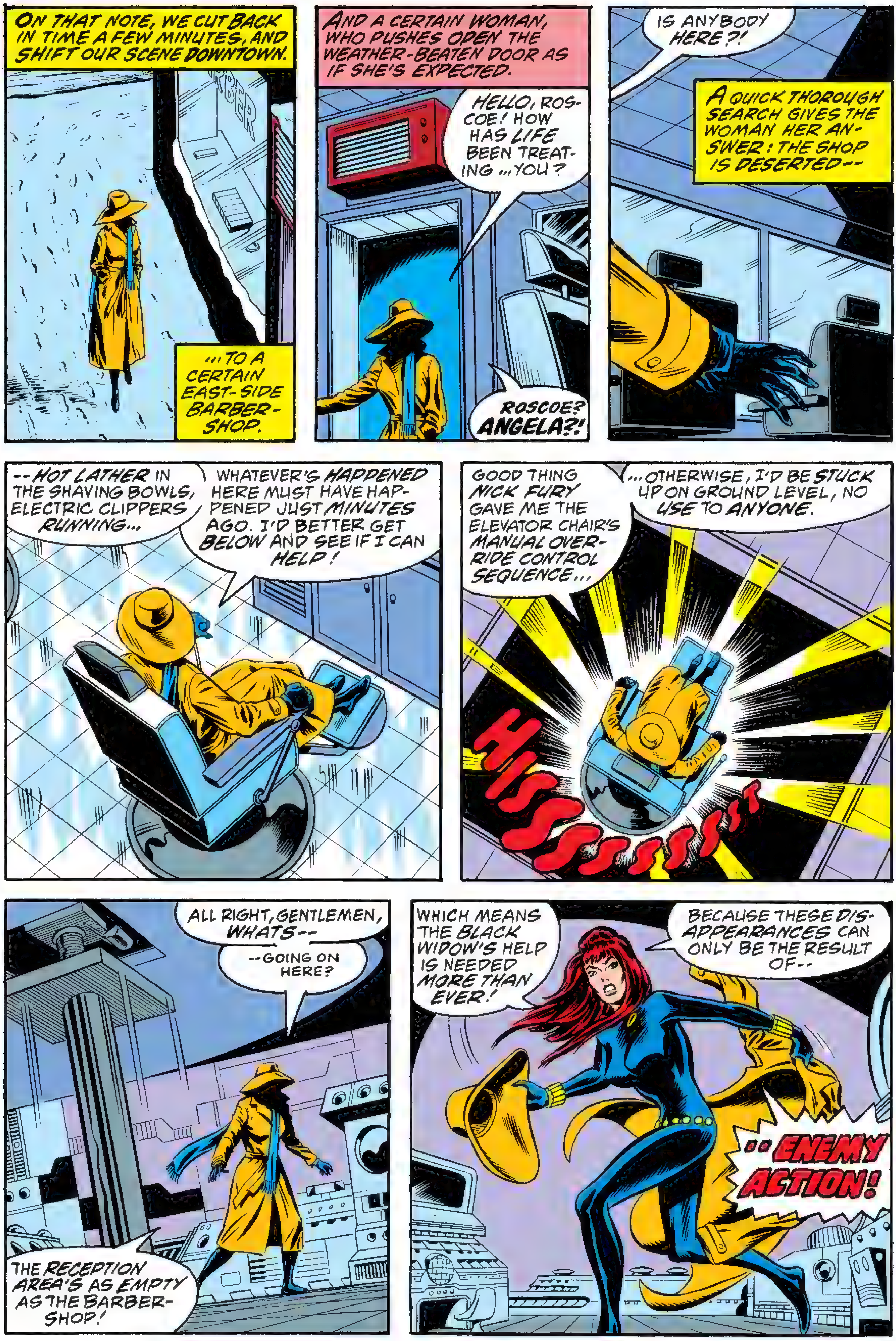

when slays the SILVER SAMURAI!
'TIS THE MONTH AFTER CHRISTMAS--AND THINGS ARE LOOKING UP IN THE WORLD. SOMEHOW, THE YULE-TIDE SPIRIT HAS CARRIED OVER INTO THE NEW YEAR. PEOPLE ARE SMILING "HULLO" IN THE STREETS AND, ALL OF A SUDDEN, NEW YORK HAS BECOME A BEAUTIFUL CITY ONCE MORE.
575
OF COURSE, FOR SOME, PEACE DOES HAVE ITS DRAWBACKS...
HO-HUM... AND ANOTHER SLOW, BORING PATROL BITES THE DUST.
YOU MIGHT AS WELL GO HOME AND CRACK THE TEXTBOOKS, PARKER. THE WAY THE CRIME RATE'S BEEN DROPPING LATELY, YOU'RE JUST WASTING YOUR TIME.
BITE YOUR TONGUE, WALL-CRAWLER, BECAUSE IN ABOUT FIVE SECONDS...

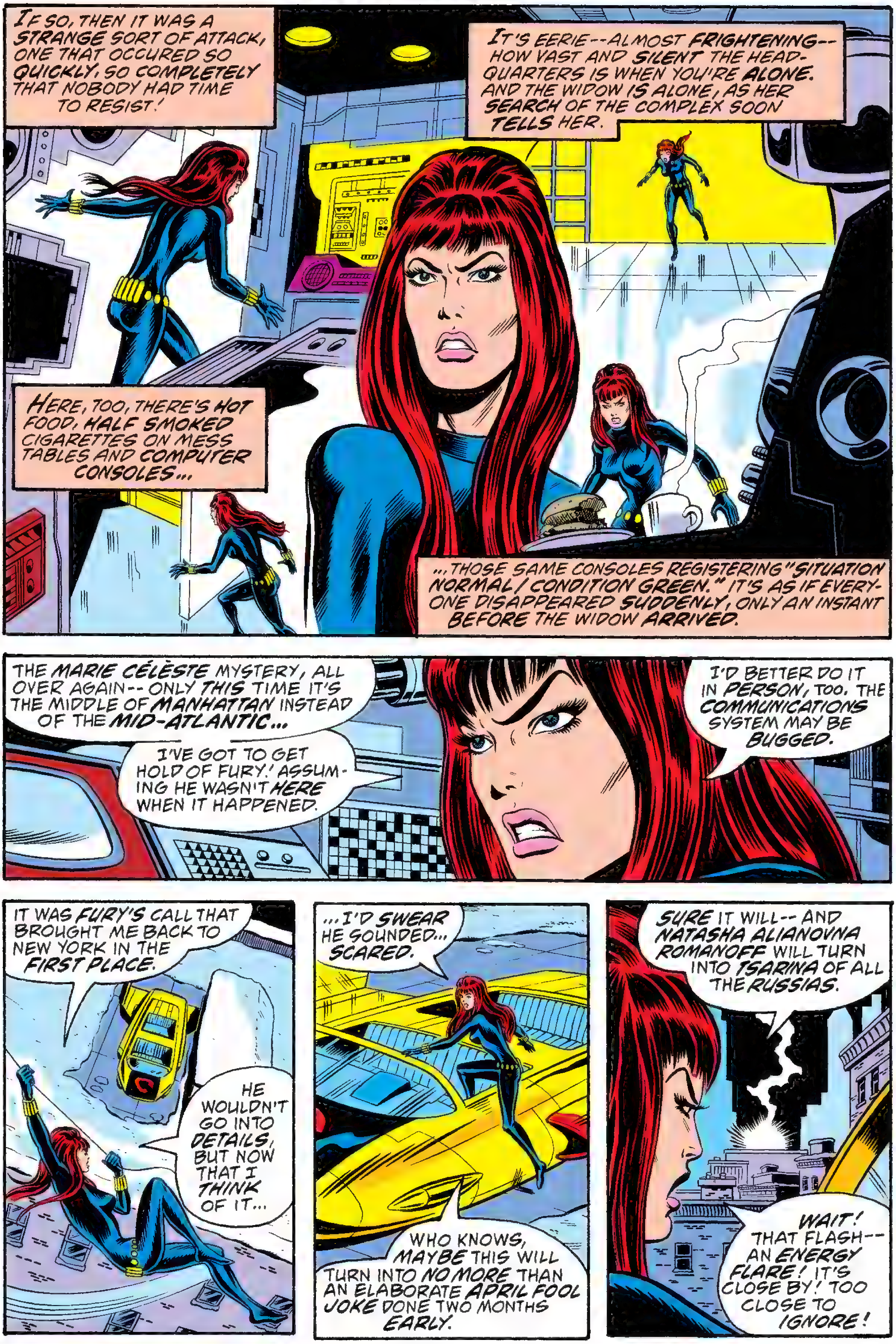

...YOU'RE GOING TO EAT THOSE WORDS.
LOOKS LIKE I SPOKE TOO SOON. THOSE GUYS COULD BE "HONEST" CITIZENS OUT FOR AN EVENING'S STROLL...
...BUT SOMEHOW, I DON'T THINK SO.
STOP! STOP THIEVES!
ERNIE, YOU STUPID-- YOU SAID THE OLD MAN WAS OUT COLD!
SKRAK!
JOE, I'M SORRY --I--!
TELL IT T' THE BOSS--
--WHILE I PUT THE JEWELER ON ICE--PERMANENTLY!
UH-UH, HOTSHOT! IF ANYONE'S GETTING PUT ON ICE, IT'S YOU!
SAY, FOR A TEN-TO-TWENTY STRETCH IN ATTICA?
DON'T FRET, THOUGH, YOU'LL HAVE YOUR PALS, HERE, TO KEEP YOU COMPANY.
WOD!
AS FOR YOU, MY FRIEND, YOU'LL BE A LOT SAFER OUT OF THE LINE OF FIRE.
WHA--?! YOU'RE SPIDER-MAN!
REALLY? I HADN'T NOTICED!
VOILA. STAY HERE 'TIL THE FIGHT'S OVER--IT SHOULDN'T TAKE LONG--THEN CALL THE POLICE.
I D-DON'T UNDERSTAND. YOU'RE... HELPING ME!
B-BUT THE DAILY BUGLE SAYS YOU'RE A... MENACE!

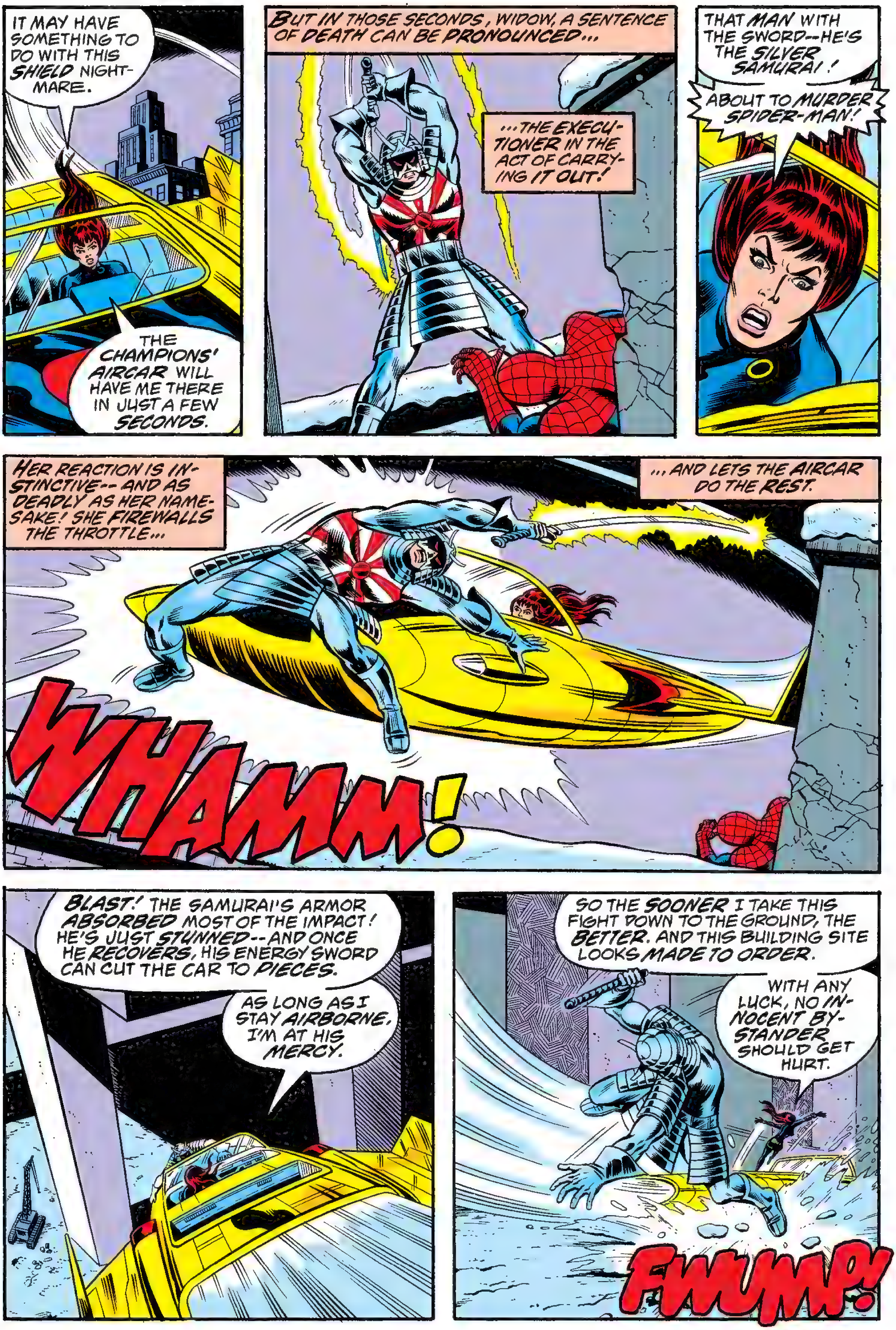

BLAM!
THE WALL-CRAWLER'S COMIN' BACK! CUT LOOSE, YOU GUYS! WE BEEN HERE TOO LONG AWREADY!
BLAM!
KILL HIM!
THAT'S BEEN TRIED BEFORE, BUNKIES, BY BETTER MEN THAN YOU!
NOTICE HOW WELL THEY SUCCEEDED?
WOK
POW
THE FOURTH MAN! HE'S MAKING A RUN FOR IT!
NO, YOU DON'T, FELLA! THIS WAS A NICE PEACEFUL YEAR UNTIL YOU JOKERS CAME ALONG!
...AND BROTHER, YOU'RE GOING TO PAY FOR MESSING IT UP.
SPLUTCH
NOW MAKE WITH SOME ANSWERS, BEFORE I REALLY GET ROUGH! WHO SENT YOU?!
NO GOOD! I HIT THE MAN TOO HARD. HE'S UNCONSCIOUS.
I GUESS NEW YORK'S FINEST'LL HAVE TO PUZZLE THIS ONE OUT ON THEIR OWN.
WHAT THE-- MY SPIDER-SENSE!! TINGLING LIKE MAD!
THERE'S SOMEONE BEHIND ME!

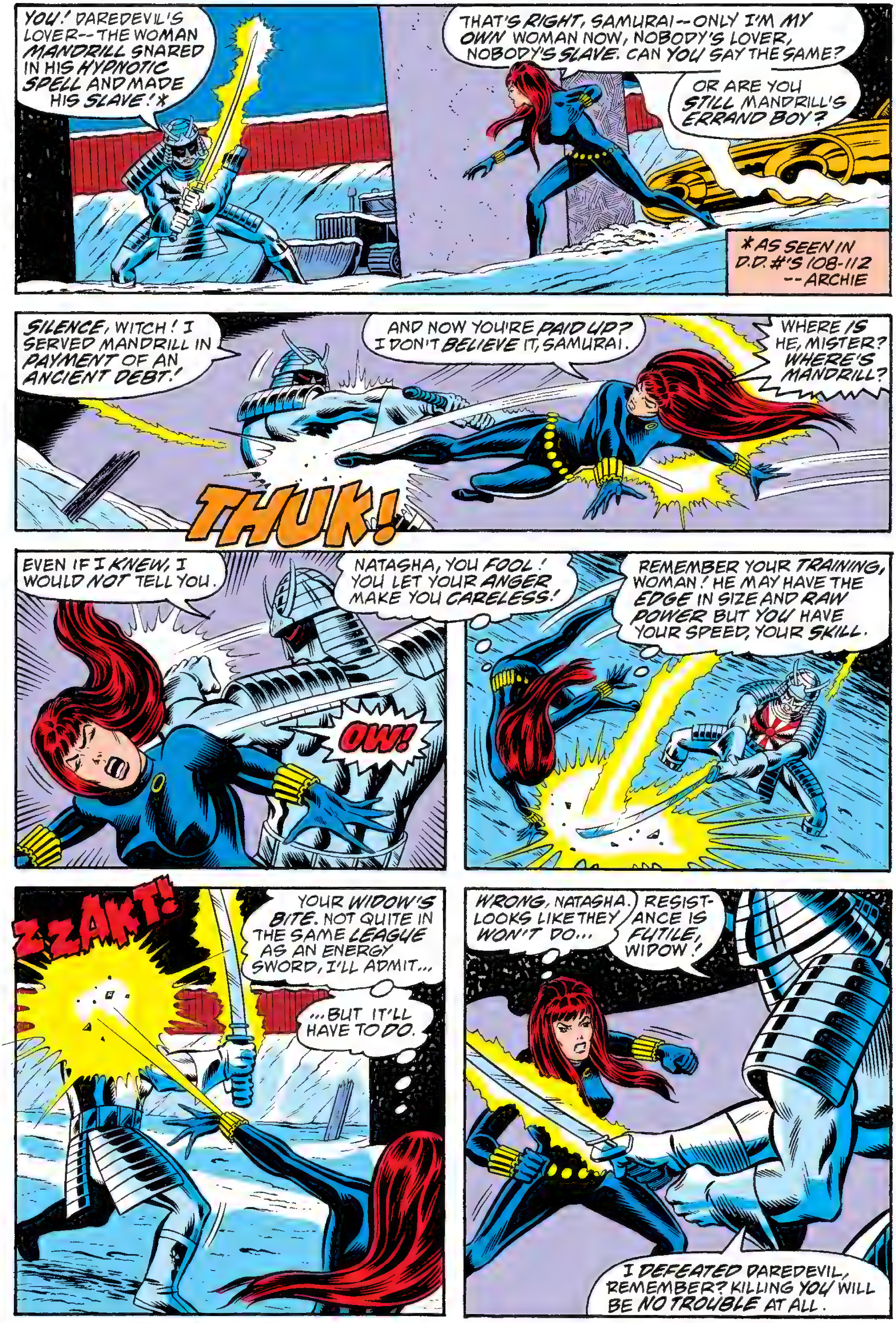

INCREDIBLE, SPIDER-MAN. MY APPROACH WAS AS SILENT AS DEATH ITSELF, YET, STILL YOU HEARD ME.
BRAK
FOR ALL THE GOOD THAT DID YOU.
HITTING ME WITH A SHEATHED SWORD?! MORE THAN THAT--! SOME KIND OF ENERGY FIELD...
UNNGNH!
CRIPES! THAT BACKHAND SWIPE THREW ME OFF THE ROOF!
GOTTA GRAB FOR THAT WINDOW LEDGE!
BINGO!
ALL I NEED IS A MINUTE TO PULL MYSELF TOGETHER, AND THEN I'LL--
YOU DON'T HAVE THAT MINUTE, AMERICAN.
HUH?!
IN FACT, YOU HAVE NO TIME LEFT AT ALL!
WHAM!
IMPACT--FELT LIKE IT PULVERIZED EVERY BONE IN... MY BODY! HE HIT ME TOO FAST, TOO HARD!
I--I'M BLACKING OUT...
HECK...I DON'T EVEN KNOW... WHO... HE... ISSSSSSS...

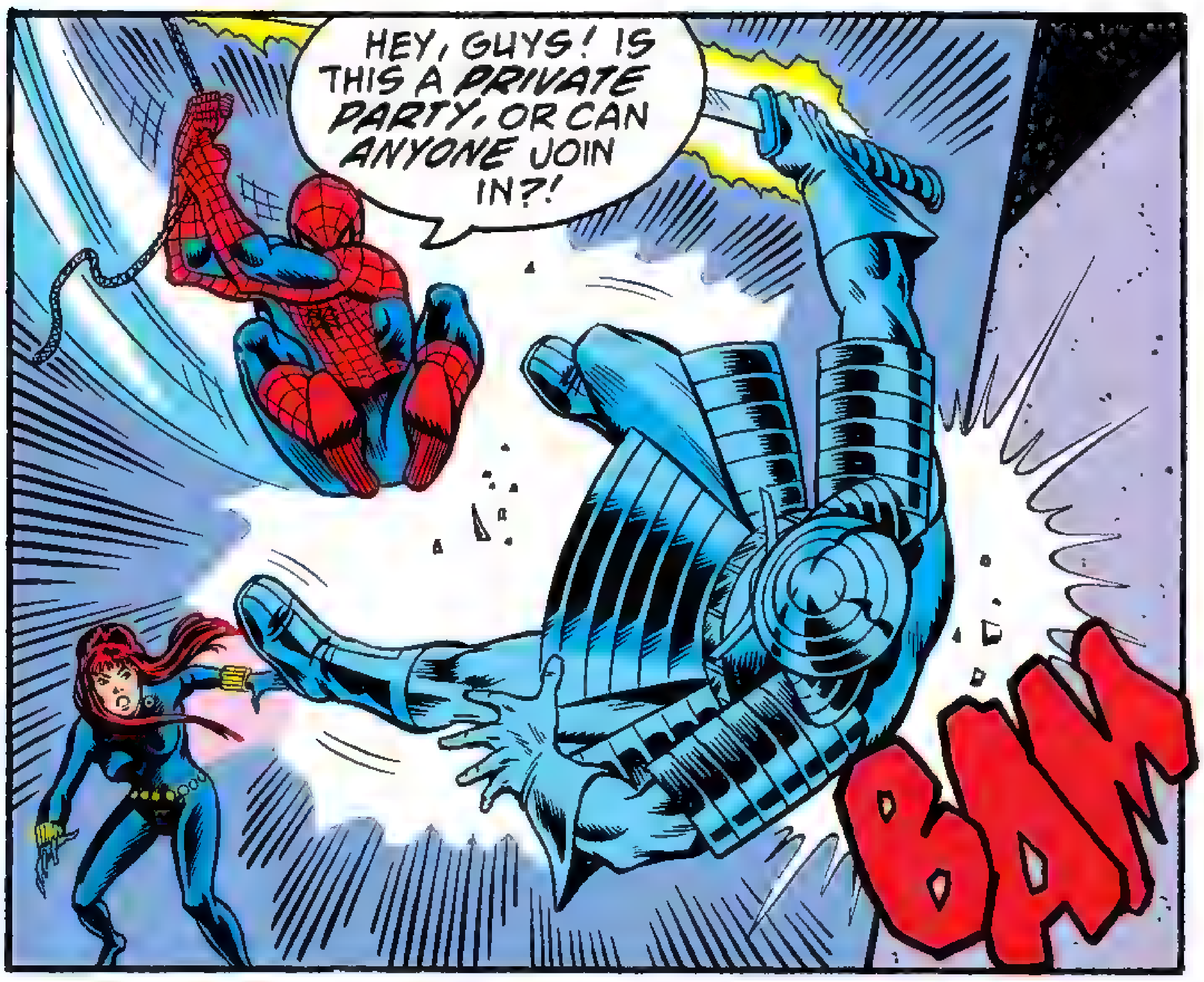

SO THIS IS THE CELEBRATED SPIDER-MAN! HA! I'VE FACED DEADLIER OPPONENTS IN THE TRAINING ARENAS OF MY YOUTH!
BUT YOU FOUGHT WITH COURAGE, AMERICAN, I'LL GIVE YOU THAT. IT'S A PITY THAT COURAGE MEANS NOTHING AGAINST THE MARTIAL ARTS SKILL AND THE RAW POWER OF...
...THE SILVER SAMURAI!
WERE THESE MORE HONORABLE TIMES, WARRIOR, YOUR COURAGE WOULD HAVE EARNED YOU YOUR LIFE... BUT THOSE TIMES ARE LONG DEAD.
AND BECAUSE NONE MUST KNOW OF MY PRESENCE IN THIS CITY, YOU MUST DIE AS WELL!

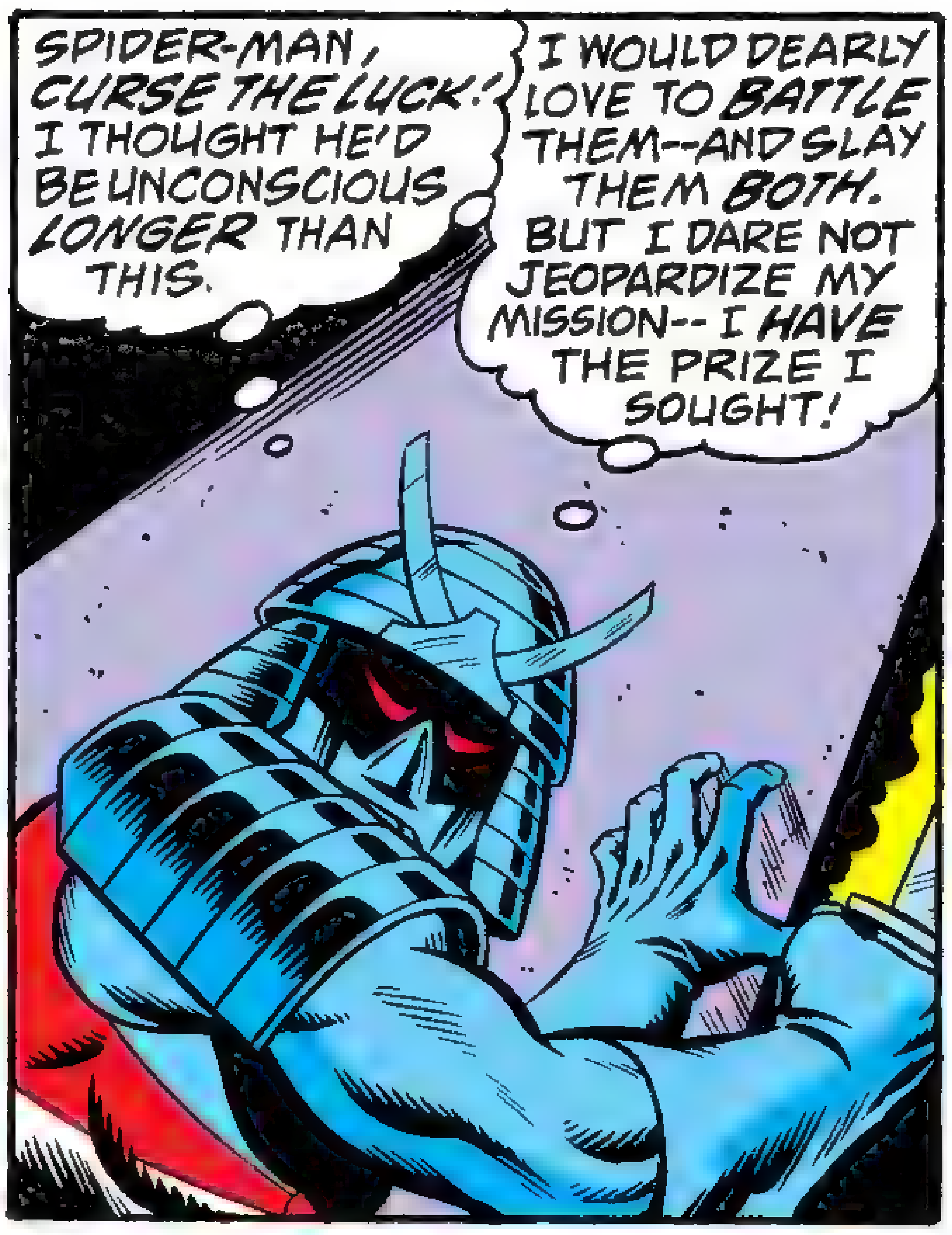

ON THAT NOTE, WE CUT BACK IN TIME A FEW MINUTES, AND SHIFT OUR SCENE DOWNTOWN.
BARBER
...TO A CERTAIN EAST-SIDE BARBER-SHOP.
AND A CERTAIN WOMAN, WHO PUSHES OPEN THE WEATHER-BEATEN DOOR AS IF SHE'S EXPECTED.
HELLO, ROSCOE! HOW HAS LIFE BEEN TREATING ...YOU?
ROSCOE? ANGELA?!
IS ANYBODY HERE?!
A QUICK THOROUGH SEARCH GIVES THE WOMAN HER ANSWER: THE SHOP IS DESERTED--
--HOT LATHER IN THE SHAVING BOWLS, ELECTRIC CLIPPERS RUNNING...
WHATEVER'S HAPPENED HERE MUST HAVE HAPPENED JUST MINUTES AGO. I'D BETTER GET BELOW AND SEE IF I CAN HELP!
GOOD THING NICK FURY GAVE ME THE ELEVATOR CHAIR'S MANUAL OVERRIDE CONTROL SEQUENCE...
...OTHERWISE, I'D BE STUCK UP ON GROUND LEVEL, NO USE TO ANYONE.
HISSSSSSSST
ALL RIGHT, GENTLEMEN, WHAT'S--
--GOING ON HERE?
THE RECEPTION AREA'S AS EMPTY AS THE BARBER-SHOP!
WHICH MEANS THE BLACK WIDOW'S HELP IS NEEDED MORE THAN EVER!
BECAUSE THESE DISAPPEARANCES CAN ONLY BE THE RESULT OF--
--ENEMY ACTION!

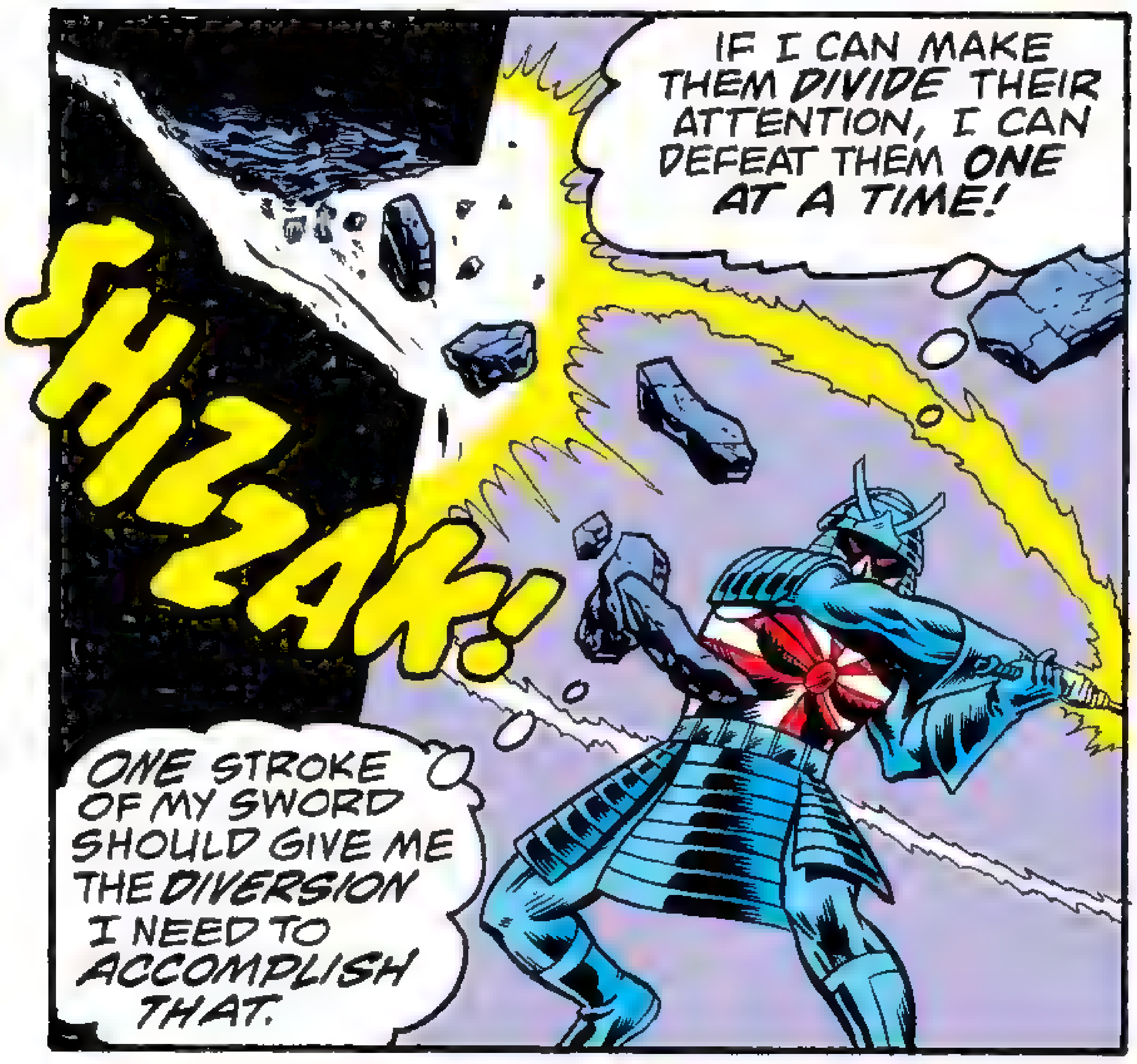

IF SO, THEN IT WAS A STRANGE SORT OF ATTACK, ONE THAT OCCURED SO QUICKLY, SO COMPLETELY THAT NOBODY HAD TIME TO RESIST!
IT'S EERIE--ALMOST FRIGHTENING--HOW VAST AND SILENT THE HEAD-QUARTERS IS WHEN YOU'RE ALONE. AND THE WIDOW IS ALONE, AS HER SEARCH OF THE COMPLEX SOON TELLS HER.
HERE, TOO, THERE'S HOT FOOD, HALF SMOKED CIGARETTES ON MESS TABLES AND COMPUTER CONSOLES...
...THOSE SAME CONSOLES REGISTERING "SITUATION NORMAL / CONDITION GREEN." IT'S AS IF EVERYONE DISAPPEARED SUDDENLY, ONLY AN INSTANT BEFORE THE WIDOW ARRIVED.
THE MARIE CÉLESTE MYSTERY, ALL OVER AGAIN--ONLY THIS TIME IT'S THE MIDDLE OF MANHATTAN INSTEAD OF THE MID-ATLANTIC...
I'VE GOT TO GET HOLD OF FURY! ASSUMING HE WASN'T HERE WHEN IT HAPPENED.
I'D BETTER DO IT IN PERSON, TOO. THE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM MAY BE BUGGED.
IT WAS FURY'S CALL THAT BROUGHT ME BACK TO NEW YORK IN THE FIRST PLACE.
HE WOULDN'T GO INTO DETAILS, BUT NOW THAT I THINK OF IT...
...I'D SWEAR HE SOUNDED... SCARED.
WHO KNOWS, MAYBE THIS WILL TURN INTO NO MORE THAN AN ELABORATE APRIL FOOL JOKE DONE TWO MONTHS EARLY.
SURE IT WILL-- AND NATASHA ALIANOVNA ROMANOFF WILL TURN INTO TSARINA OF ALL THE RUSSIAS.
WAIT! THAT FLASH--AN ENERGY FLARE! IT'S CLOSE BY! TOO CLOSE TO IGNORE!

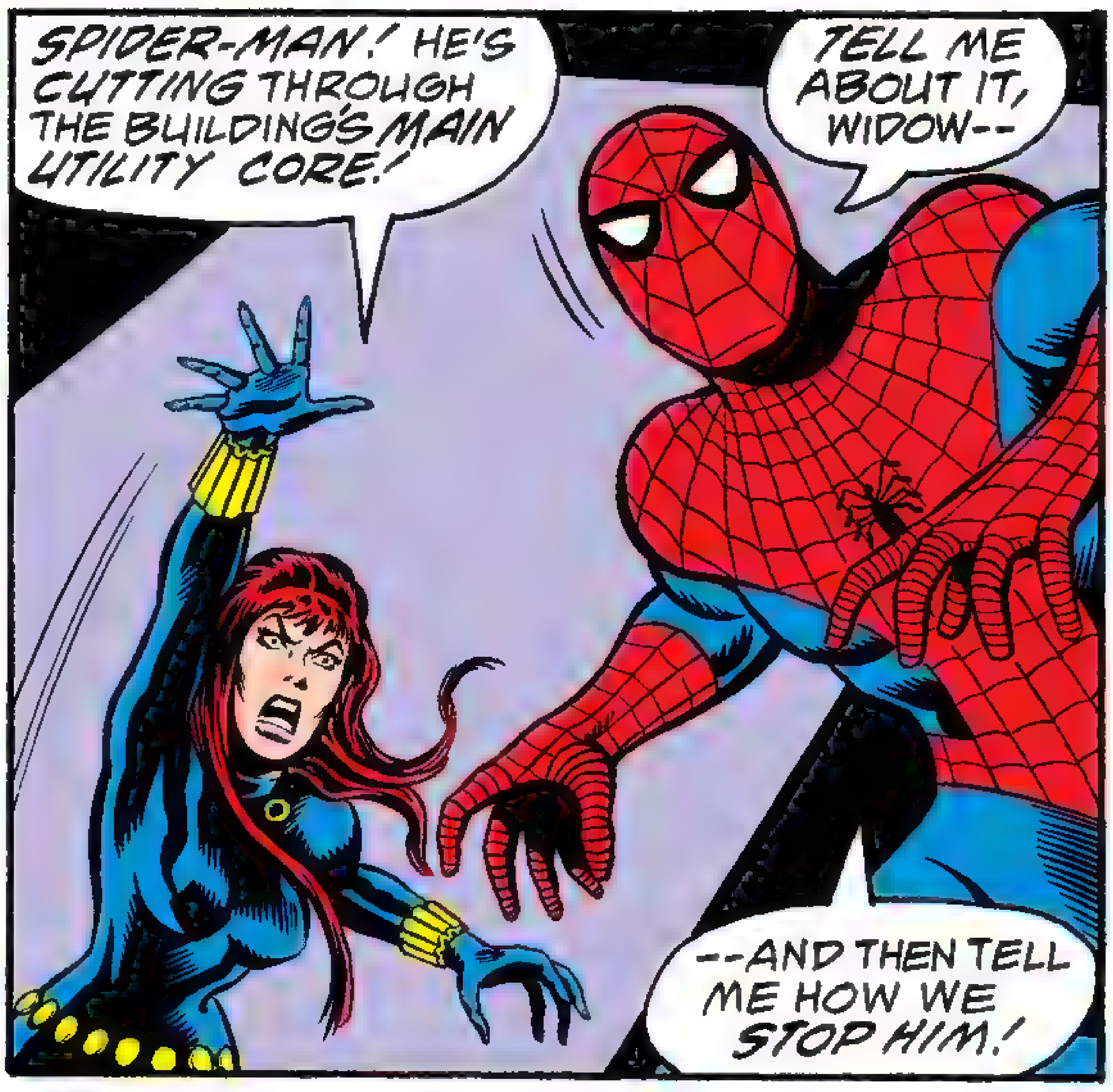

IT MAY HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THIS SHIELD NIGHTMARE.
THE CHAMPIONS' AIRCAR WILL HAVE ME THERE IN JUST A FEW SECONDS.
BUT IN THOSE SECONDS, WIDOW, A SENTENCE OF DEATH CAN BE PRONOUNCED...
...THE EXECUTIONER IN THE ACT OF CARRYING IT OUT!
THAT MAN WITH THE SWORD--HE'S THE SILVER SAMURAI!
ABOUT TO MURDER SPIDER-MAN!
HER REACTION IS INSTINCTIVE-- AND AS DEADLY AS HER NAMESAKE! SHE FIREWALLS THE THROTTLE...
...AND LETS THE AIRCAR DO THE REST.
WHAMM!
BLAST! THE SAMURAI'S ARMOR ABSORBED MOST OF THE IMPACT! HE'S JUST STUNNED--AND ONCE HE RECOVERS, HIS ENERGY SWORD CAN CUT THE CAR TO PIECES.
AS LONG AS I STAY AIRBORNE, I'M AT HIS MERCY.
SO THE SOONER I TAKE THIS FIGHT DOWN TO THE GROUND, THE BETTER. AND THIS BUILDING SITE LOOKS MADE TO ORDER.
WITH ANY LUCK, NO INNOCENT BYSTANDER SHOULD GET HURT.
FWUMP!

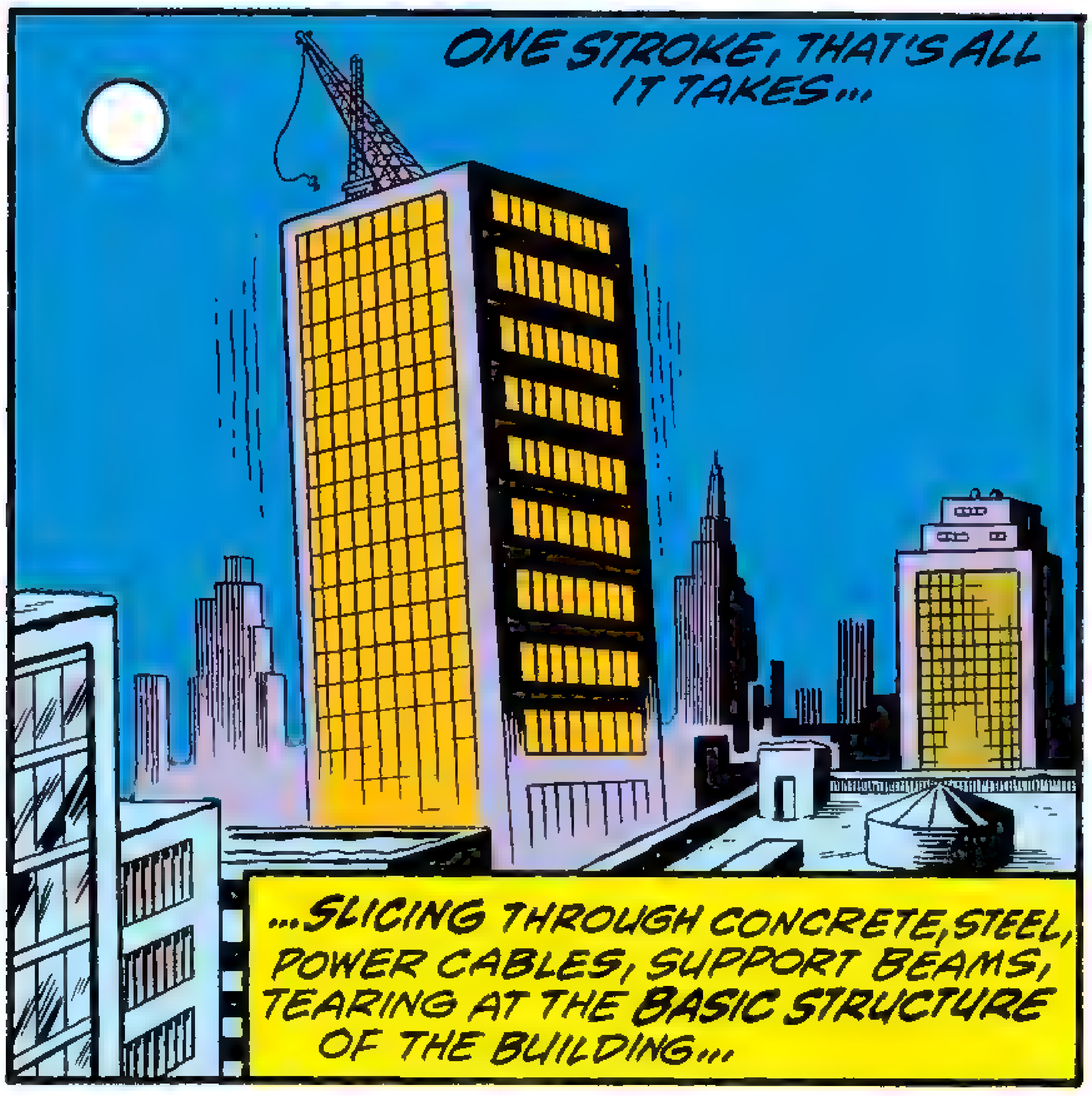

YOU! DAREDEVIL'S LOVER--THE WOMAN MANDRILL SNARED IN HIS HYPNOTIC SPELL AND MADE HIS SLAVE!*
THAT'S RIGHT, SAMURAI--ONLY I'M MY OWN WOMAN NOW, NOBODY'S LOVER, NOBODY'S SLAVE. CAN YOU SAY THE SAME?
OR ARE YOU STILL MANDRILL'S ERRAND BOY?
*AS SEEN IN D.D. #'S 108-112 --ARCHIE
SILENCE, WITCH! I SERVED MANDRILL IN PAYMENT OF AN ANCIENT DEBT!
AND NOW YOU'RE PAID UP? I DON'T BELIEVE IT, SAMURAI.
WHERE IS HE, MISTER? WHERE'S MANDRILL?
THUK!
EVEN IF I KNEW, I WOULD NOT TELL YOU.
OW!
NATASHA, YOU FOOL! YOU LET YOUR ANGER MAKE YOU CARELESS!
REMEMBER YOUR TRAINING, WOMAN! HE MAY HAVE THE EDGE IN SIZE AND RAW POWER BUT YOU HAVE YOUR SPEED, YOUR SKILL.
ZZAKT!
YOUR WIDOW'S BITE. NOT QUITE IN THE SAME LEAGUE AS AN ENERGY SWORD, I'LL ADMIT...
...BUT IT'LL HAVE TO DO.
WRONG, NATASHA. LOOKS LIKE THEY WON'T DO...
RESISTANCE IS FUTILE, WIDOW!
I DEFEATED DAREDEVIL, REMEMBER? KILLING YOU WILL BE NO TROUBLE AT ALL.

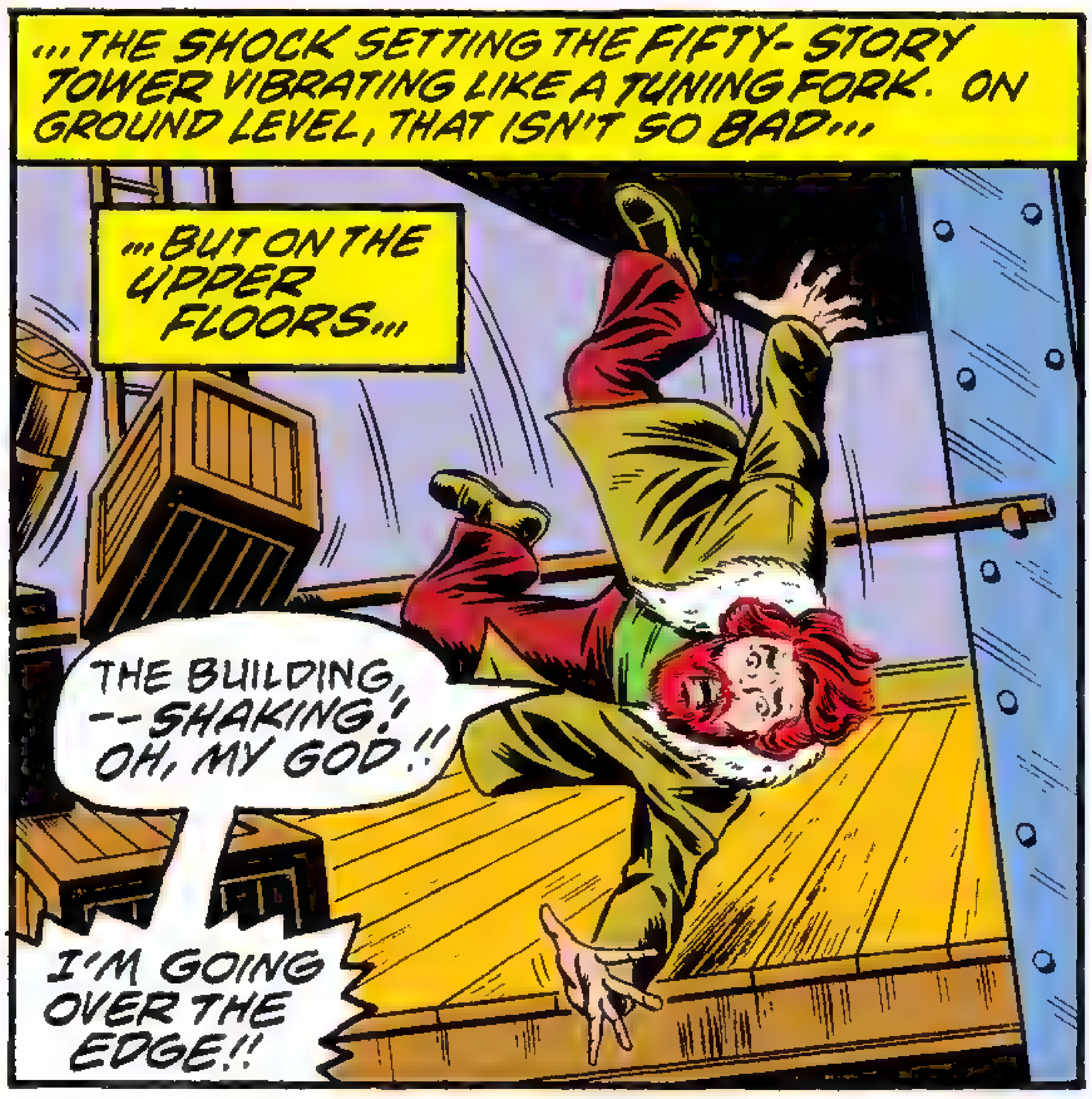

HEY, GUYS! IS THIS A PRIVATE PARTY, OR CAN ANYONE JOIN IN?!
BAM

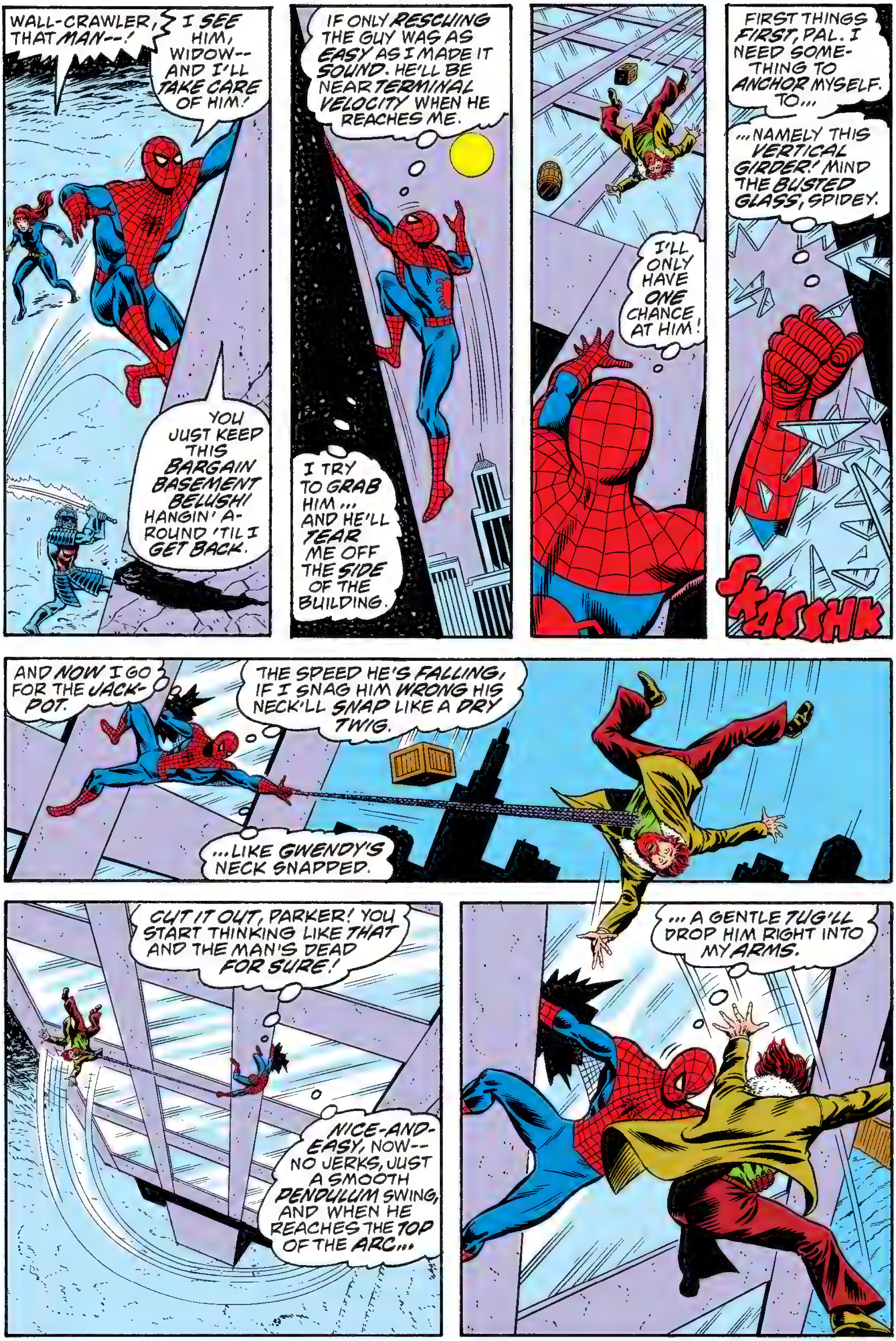

SPIDER-MAN, CURSE THE LUCK! I THOUGHT HE'D BE UNCONSCIOUS LONGER THAN THIS.
I WOULD DEARLY LOVE TO BATTLE THEM--AND SLAY THEM BOTH. BUT I DARE NOT JEOPARDIZE MY MISSION-- I HAVE THE PRIZE I SOUGHT!

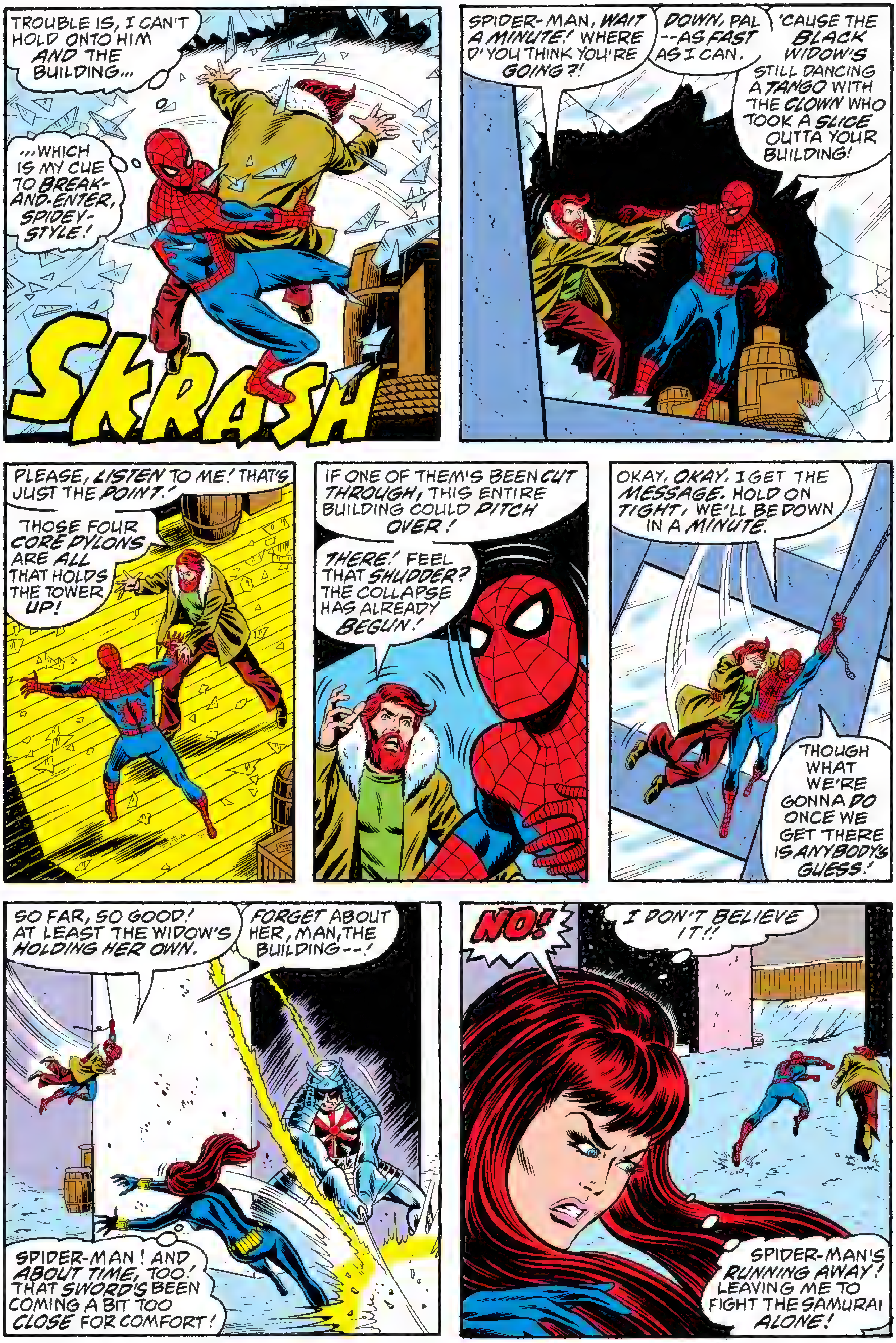

IF I CAN MAKE THEM DIVIDE THEIR ATTENTION, I CAN DEFEAT THEM ONE AT A TIME!
SHIZZAK!
ONE STROKE OF MY SWORD SHOULD GIVE ME THE DIVERSION I NEED TO ACCOMPLISH THAT.

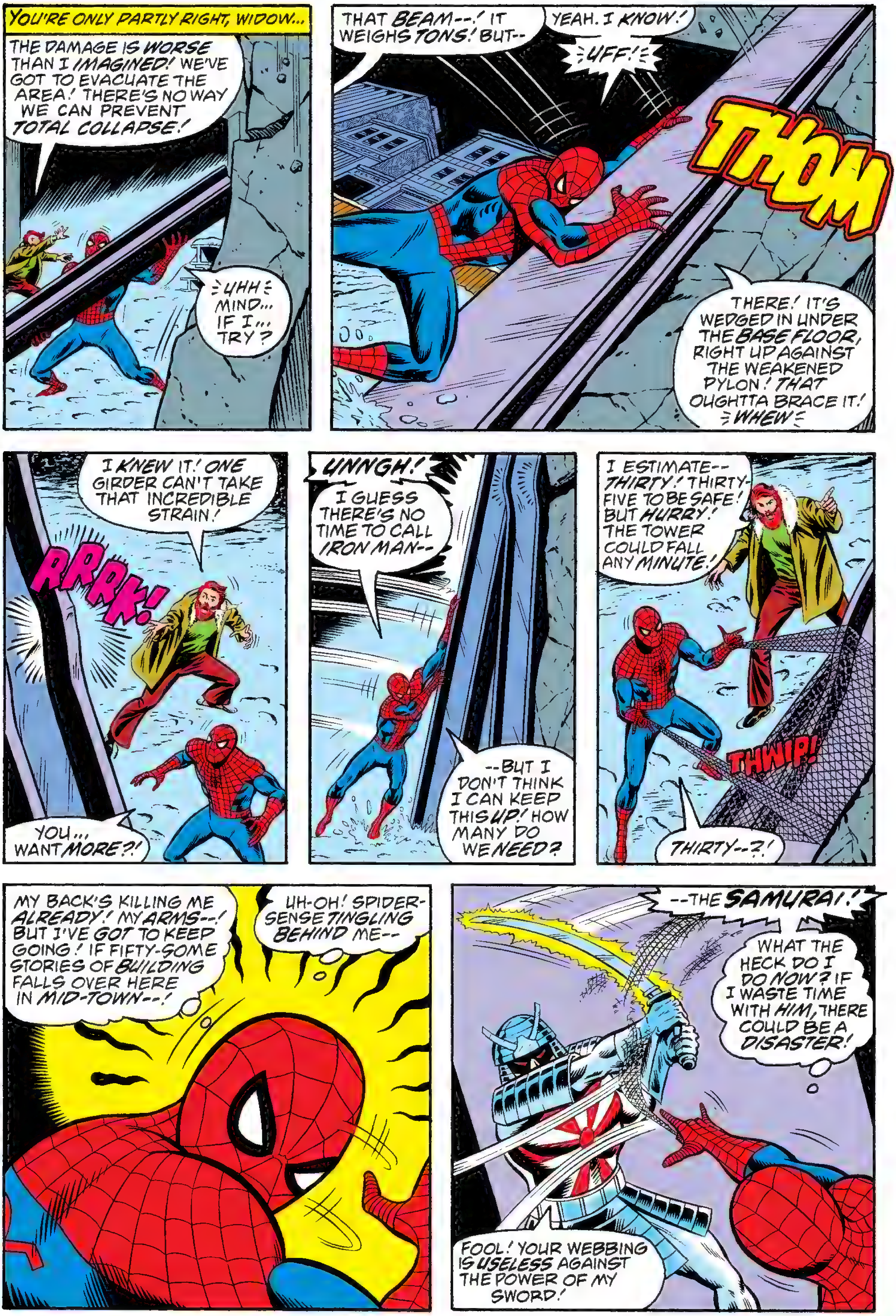

SPIDER-MAN! HE'S CUTTING THROUGH THE BUILDING'S MAIN UTILITY CORE!
TELL ME ABOUT IT, WIDOW--
--AND THEN TELL ME HOW WE STOP HIM!

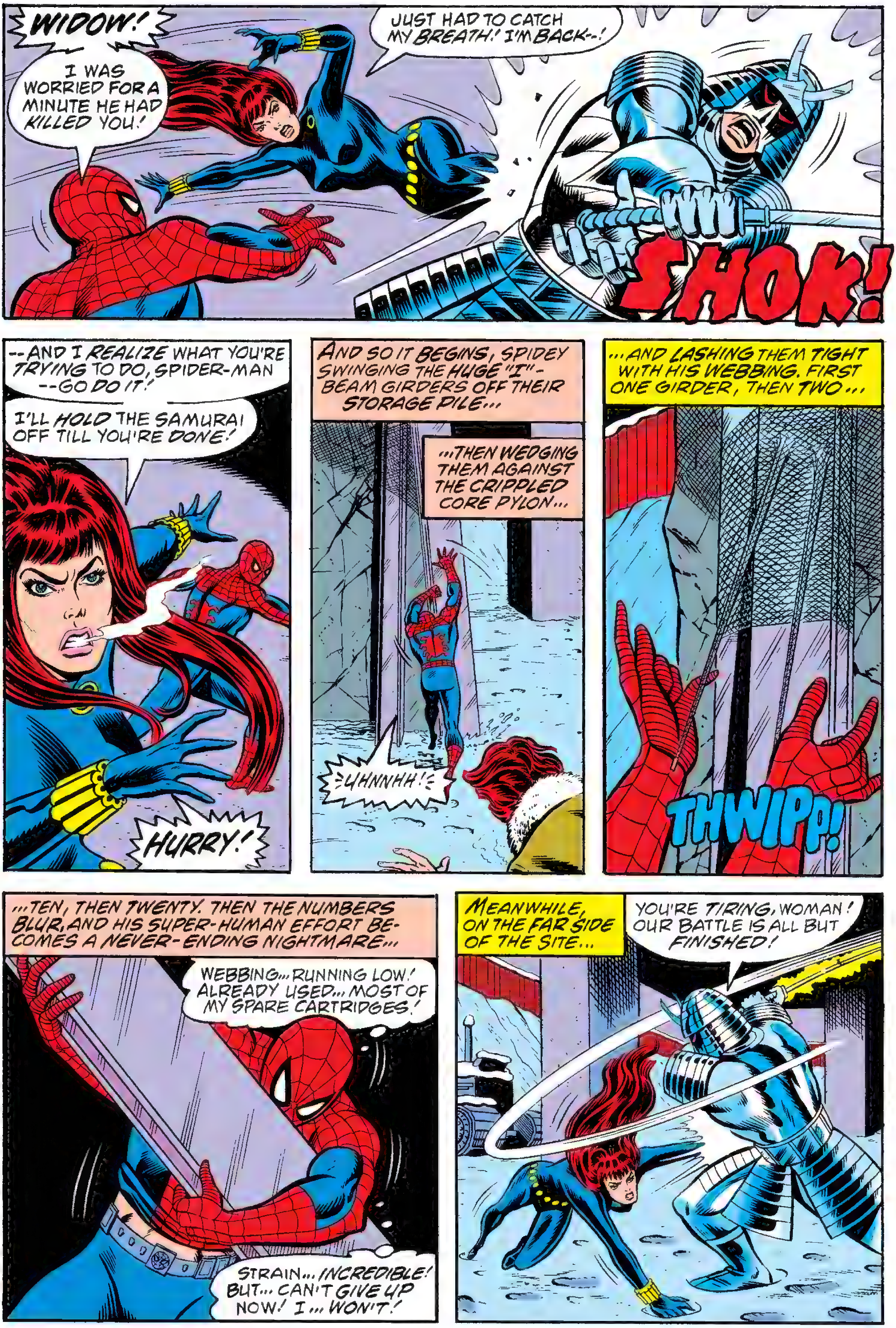

ONE STROKE, THAT'S ALL IT TAKES...
...SLICING THROUGH CONCRETE, STEEL, POWER CABLES, SUPPORT BEAMS, TEARING AT THE BASIC STRUCTURE OF THE BUILDING...

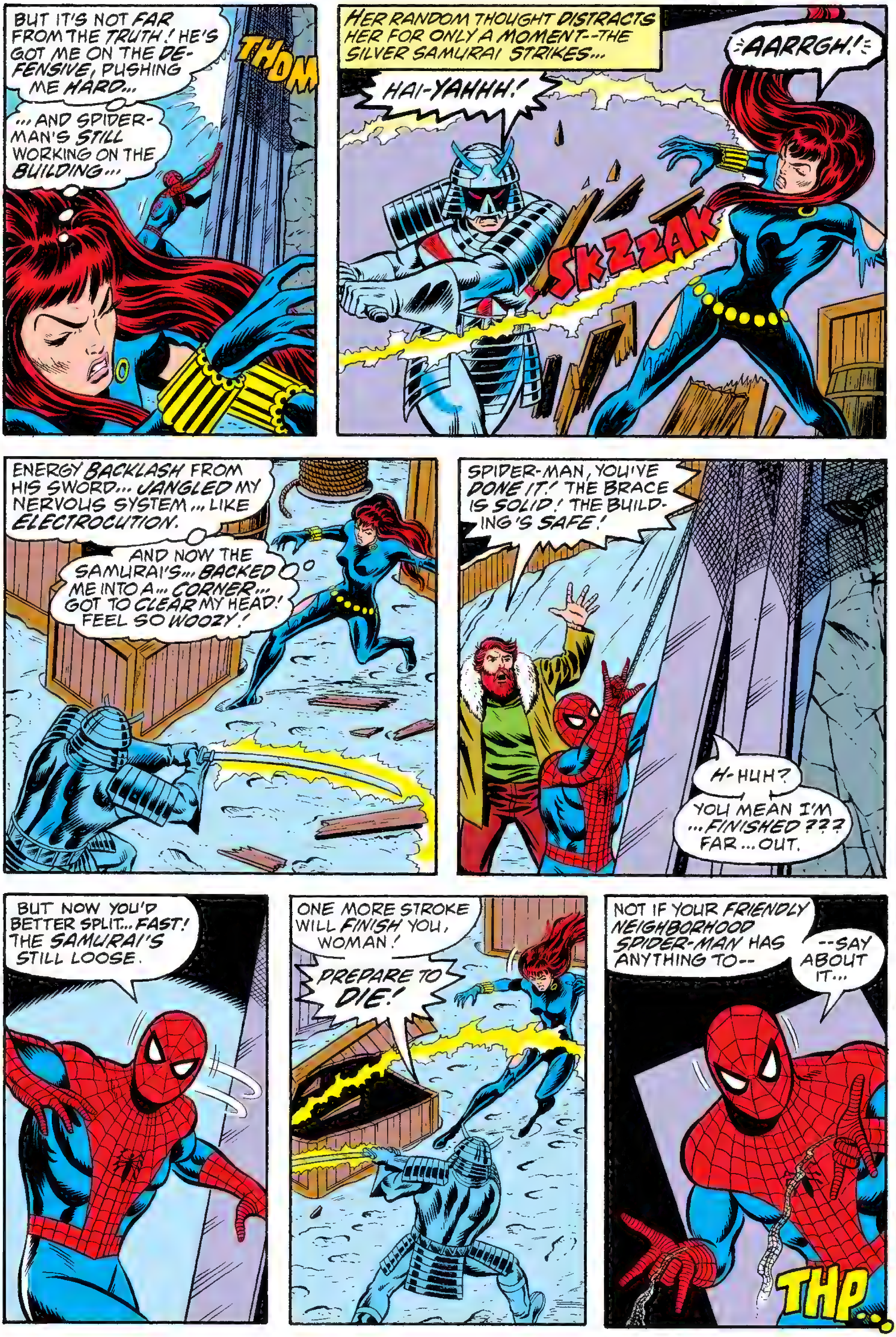

...THE SHOCK SETTING THE FIFTY-STORY TOWER VIBRATING LIKE A TUNING FORK. ON GROUND LEVEL, THAT ISN'T SO BAD...
...BUT ON THE UPPER FLOORS...
THE BUILDING, --SHAKING! OH, MY GOD!!
I'M GOING OVER THE EDGE!!

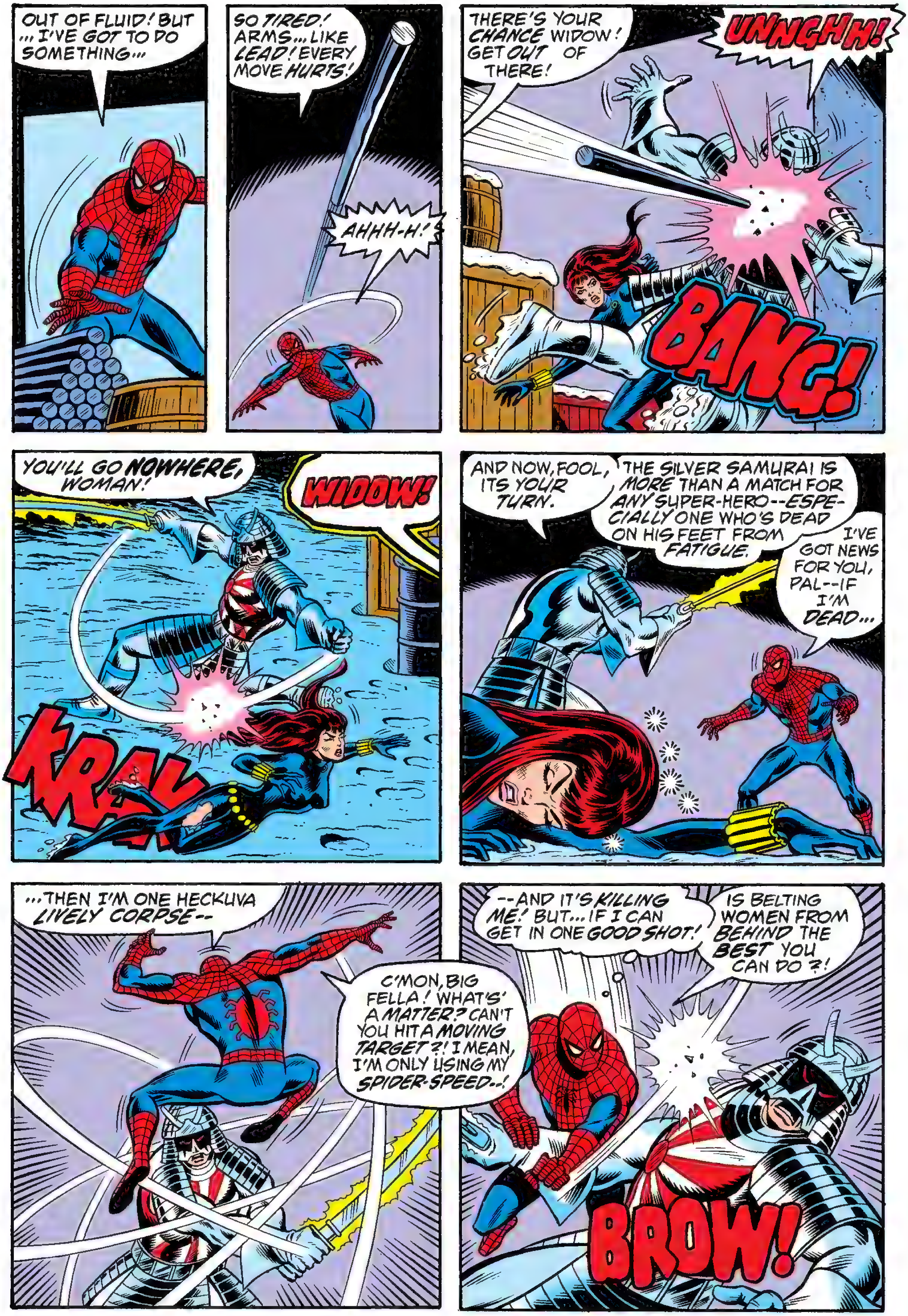

WALL-CRAWLER, THAT MAN--!
I SEE HIM, WIDOW-- AND I'LL TAKE CARE OF HIM!
YOU JUST KEEP THIS BARGAIN BASEMENT BELUSHI HANGIN' AROUND 'TIL I GET BACK.
IF ONLY RESCUING THE GUY WAS AS EASY AS I MADE IT SOUND. HE'LL BE NEAR TERMINAL VELOCITY WHEN HE REACHES ME.
I TRY TO GRAB HIM... AND HE'LL TEAR ME OFF THE SIDE OF THE BUILDING.
I'LL ONLY HAVE ONE CHANCE AT HIM!
FIRST THINGS FIRST, PAL. I NEED SOMETHING TO ANCHOR MYSELF. TO...
...NAMELY THIS VERTICAL GIRDER! MIND THE BUSTED GLASS, SPIDEY.
KASSHK
AND NOW I GO FOR THE JACKPOT.
THE SPEED HE'S FALLING, IF I SNAG HIM WRONG HIS NECK'LL SNAP LIKE A DRY TWIG.
...LIKE GWENDY'S NECK SNAPPED.
CUT IT OUT, PARKER! YOU START THINKING LIKE THAT AND THE MAN'S DEAD FOR SURE!
NICE-AND-EASY, NOW-- NO JERKS, JUST A SMOOTH PENDULUM SWING, AND WHEN HE REACHES THE TOP OF THE ARC...
...A GENTLE TUG'LL DROP HIM RIGHT INTO MY ARMS.

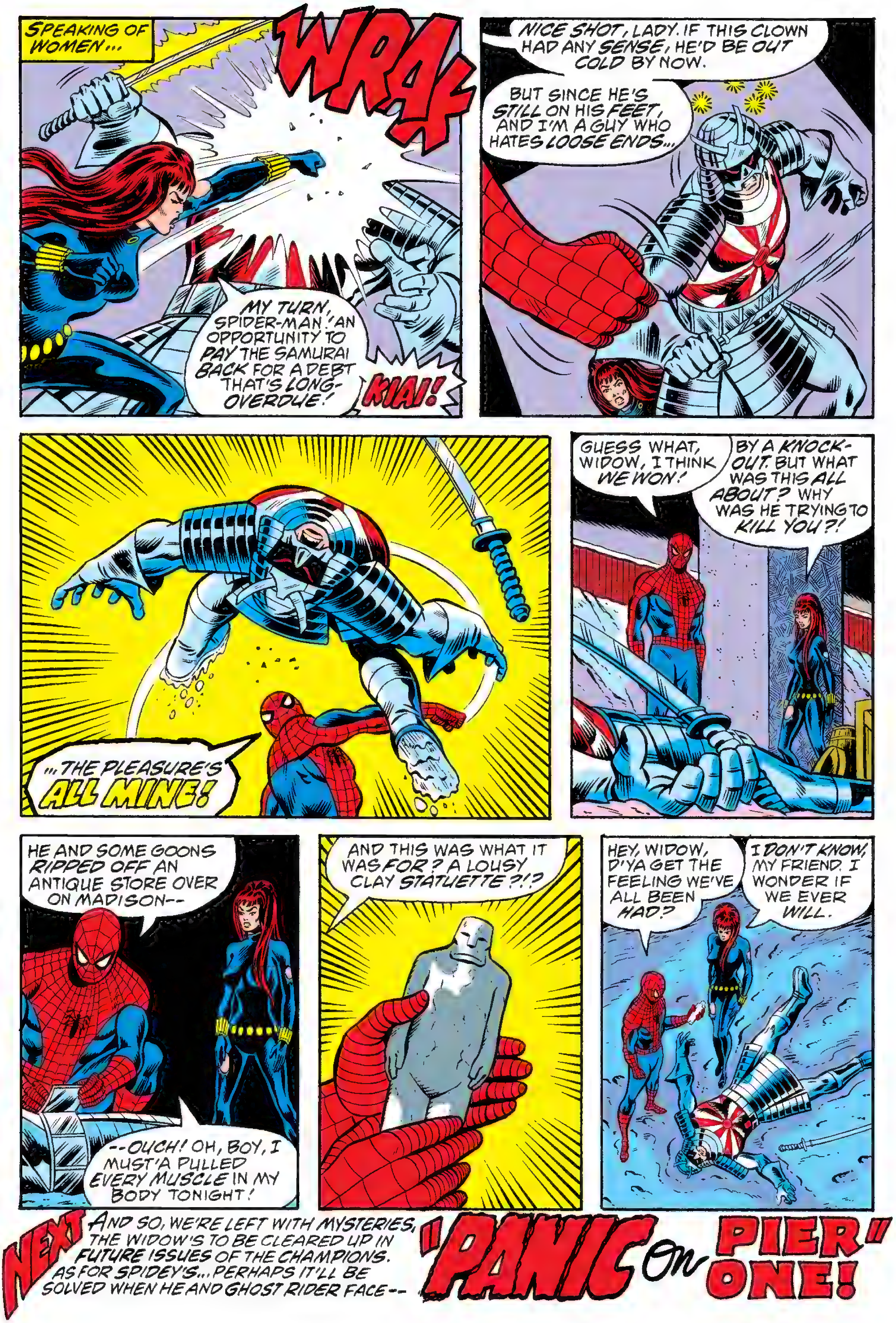

TROUBLE IS, I CAN'T HOLD ONTO HIM *AND* THE BUILDING...
...WHICH IS MY CUE TO *BREAK-AND-ENTER*, *SPIDEY-STYLE!*
SKRASH
SPIDER-MAN, *WAIT A MINUTE!* WHERE D'YOU THINK YOU'RE *GOING?!*
DOWN, PAL --AS *FAST* AS I CAN.
'CAUSE THE *BLACK WIDOW'S* STILL DANCING A *TANGO* WITH THE *CLOWN* WHO TOOK A *SLICE* OUTTA YOUR BUILDING!
PLEASE, *LISTEN* TO ME! THAT'S JUST THE *POINT!*
THOSE FOUR *CORE PYLONS* ARE *ALL* THAT HOLDS THE TOWER *UP!*
IF ONE OF THEM'S BEEN *CUT THROUGH*, THIS ENTIRE BUILDING COULD *PITCH OVER!*
THERE! FEEL THAT *SHUDDER?* THE COLLAPSE HAS ALREADY *BEGUN!*
OKAY, *OKAY*, I GET THE *MESSAGE*. HOLD ON *TIGHT*, WE'LL BE DOWN IN A *MINUTE*.
THOUGH WHAT WE'RE GONNA *DO* ONCE WE GET THERE IS *ANYBODY'S GUESS!*
SO FAR, SO GOOD! AT LEAST THE WIDOW'S *HOLDING HER OWN*.
FORGET ABOUT HER, MAN, THE BUILDING--!
SPIDER-MAN! AND *ABOUT TIME*, TOO! THAT *SWORD'S* BEEN COMING A BIT TOO *CLOSE* FOR COMFORT!
NO!
I DON'T BELIEVE IT!!
SPIDER-MAN'S *RUNNING AWAY!* LEAVING ME TO FIGHT THE SAMURAI *ALONE!*

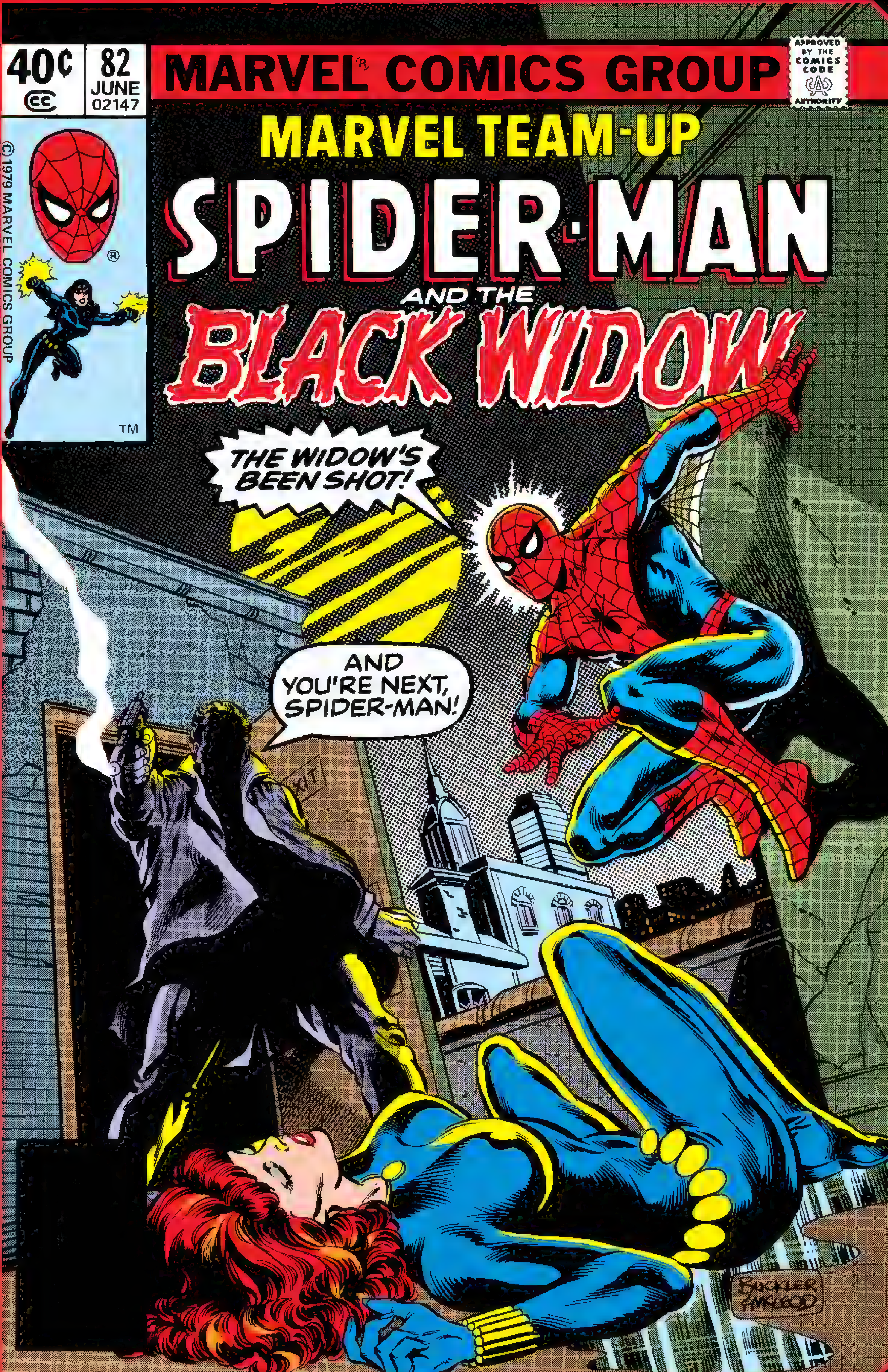

YOU'RE ONLY PARTLY RIGHT, WIDOW...
THE DAMAGE IS WORSE THAN I IMAGINED! WE'VE GOT TO EVACUATE THE AREA! THERE'S NO WAY WE CAN PREVENT TOTAL COLLAPSE!
UHH MIND... IF I... TRY?
THAT BEAM--! IT WEIGHS TONS! BUT--
YEAH. I KNOW!
UFF!
THOM
THERE! IT'S WEDGED IN UNDER THE BASE FLOOR, RIGHT UP AGAINST THE WEAKENED PYLON! THAT OUGHTTA BRACE IT! WHEW
I KNEW IT! ONE GIRDER CAN'T TAKE THAT INCREDIBLE STRAIN!
RRRK!
YOU... WANT MORE?!
UNNGH!
I GUESS THERE'S NO TIME TO CALL IRON MAN--
--BUT I DON'T THINK I CAN KEEP THIS UP! HOW MANY DO WE NEED?
I ESTIMATE-- THIRTY! THIRTY-FIVE TO BE SAFE! BUT HURRY! THE TOWER COULD FALL ANY MINUTE!
THWIP!
THIRTY--?!
MY BACK'S KILLING ME ALREADY! MY ARMS--! BUT I'VE GOT TO KEEP GOING! IF FIFTY-SOME STORIES OF BUILDING FALLS OVER HERE IN MID-TOWN--!
UH-OH! SPIDER-SENSE TINGLING BEHIND ME--
--THE SAMURAI!
WHAT THE HECK DO I DO NOW? IF I WASTE TIME WITH HIM, THERE COULD BE A DISASTER!
FOOL! YOUR WEBBING IS USELESS AGAINST THE POWER OF MY SWORD!


WIDOW!
I WAS WORRIED FOR A MINUTE HE HAD KILLED YOU!
JUST HAD TO CATCH MY BREATH! I'M BACK--!
SHOK!
--AND I REALIZE WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO DO, SPIDER-MAN --GO DO IT!
I'LL HOLD THE SAMURAI OFF TILL YOU'RE DONE!
HURRY!
AND SO IT BEGINS, SPIDEY SWINGING THE HUGE "I"-BEAM GIRDERS OFF THEIR STORAGE PILE...
...THEN WEDGING THEM AGAINST THE CRIPPLED CORE PYLON...
UHNNHH!
...AND LASHING THEM TIGHT WITH HIS WEBBING. FIRST ONE GIRDER, THEN TWO...
THWIPP!
...TEN, THEN TWENTY. THEN THE NUMBERS BLUR, AND HIS SUPER-HUMAN EFFORT BECOMES A NEVER-ENDING NIGHTMARE...
WEBBING... RUNNING LOW! ALREADY USED... MOST OF MY SPARE CARTRIDGES!
STRAIN... INCREDIBLE! BUT... CAN'T GIVE UP NOW! I... WON'T!
MEANWHILE, ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE SITE...
YOU'RE TIRING, WOMAN! OUR BATTLE IS ALL BUT FINISHED!


BUT IT'S NOT FAR FROM THE TRUTH! HE'S GOT ME ON THE DEFENSIVE, PUSHING ME HARD...
...AND SPIDER-MAN'S STILL WORKING ON THE BUILDING...
THOM
HER RANDOM THOUGHT DISTRACTS HER FOR ONLY A MOMENT--THE SILVER SAMURAI STRIKES...
HAI-YAHHH!
AARRGH!
SKZZAK
ENERGY BACKLASH FROM HIS SWORD... JANGLED MY NERVOUS SYSTEM... LIKE ELECTROCUTION.
AND NOW THE SAMURAI'S... BACKED ME INTO A... CORNER... GOT TO CLEAR MY HEAD! FEEL SO WOOZY!
SPIDER-MAN, YOU'VE DONE IT! THE BRACE IS SOLID! THE BUILDING'S SAFE!
H-HUH?
YOU MEAN I'M ...FINISHED??? FAR... OUT.
BUT NOW YOU'D BETTER SPLIT... FAST! THE SAMURAI'S STILL LOOSE.
ONE MORE STROKE WILL FINISH YOU, WOMAN!
PREPARE TO DIE!
NOT IF YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD SPIDER-MAN HAS ANYTHING TO--
--SAY ABOUT IT...
THP...


OUT OF FLUID! BUT ...I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING...
SO TIRED! ARMS...LIKE LEAD! EVERY MOVE HURTS!
AHHH-H!
THERE'S YOUR CHANCE WIDOW! GET OUT OF THERE!
UNNGHH!
BANG!
YOU'LL GO NOWHERE, WOMAN!
WIDOW!
KRAK
AND NOW, FOOL, ITS YOUR TURN.
THE SILVER SAMURAI IS MORE THAN A MATCH FOR ANY SUPER-HERO--ESPECIALLY ONE WHO'S DEAD ON HIS FEET FROM FATIGUE.
I'VE GOT NEWS FOR YOU, PAL--IF I'M DEAD...
...THEN I'M ONE HECKUVA LIVELY CORPSE--
C'MON, BIG FELLA! WHAT'S' A MATTER? CAN'T YOU HIT A MOVING TARGET?! I MEAN, I'M ONLY USING MY SPIDER-SPEED--!
--AND IT'S KILLING ME! BUT...IF I CAN GET IN ONE GOOD SHOT!
IS BELTING WOMEN FROM BEHIND THE BEST YOU CAN DO?!
BROW!


SPEAKING OF WOMEN...
WRAK
MY TURN, SPIDER-MAN! AN OPPORTUNITY TO PAY THE SAMURAI BACK FOR A DEBT THAT'S LONG-OVERDUE!
KIAI!
NICE SHOT, LADY. IF THIS CLOWN HAD ANY SENSE, HE'D BE OUT COLD BY NOW.
BUT SINCE HE'S STILL ON HIS FEET, AND I'M A GUY WHO HATES LOOSE ENDS...
...THE PLEASURE'S ALL MINE!
GUESS WHAT, WIDOW, I THINK WE WON!
BY A KNOCK-OUT. BUT WHAT WAS THIS ALL ABOUT? WHY WAS HE TRYING TO KILL YOU?!
HE AND SOME GOONS RIPPED OFF AN ANTIQUE STORE OVER ON MADISON--
--OUCH! OH, BOY, I MUST'A PULLED EVERY MUSCLE IN MY BODY TONIGHT!
AND THIS WAS WHAT IT WAS FOR? A LOUSY CLAY STATUETTE?!?
HEY, WIDOW, D'YA GET THE FEELING WE'VE ALL BEEN HAD?
I DON'T KNOW, MY FRIEND. I WONDER IF WE EVER WILL.
NEXT
AND SO, WE'RE LEFT WITH MYSTERIES, THE WIDOW'S TO BE CLEARED UP IN FUTURE ISSUES OF THE CHAMPIONS. AS FOR SPIDEY'S... PERHAPS IT'LL BE SOLVED WHEN HE AND GHOST RIDER FACE--
"PANIC ON PIER ONE!"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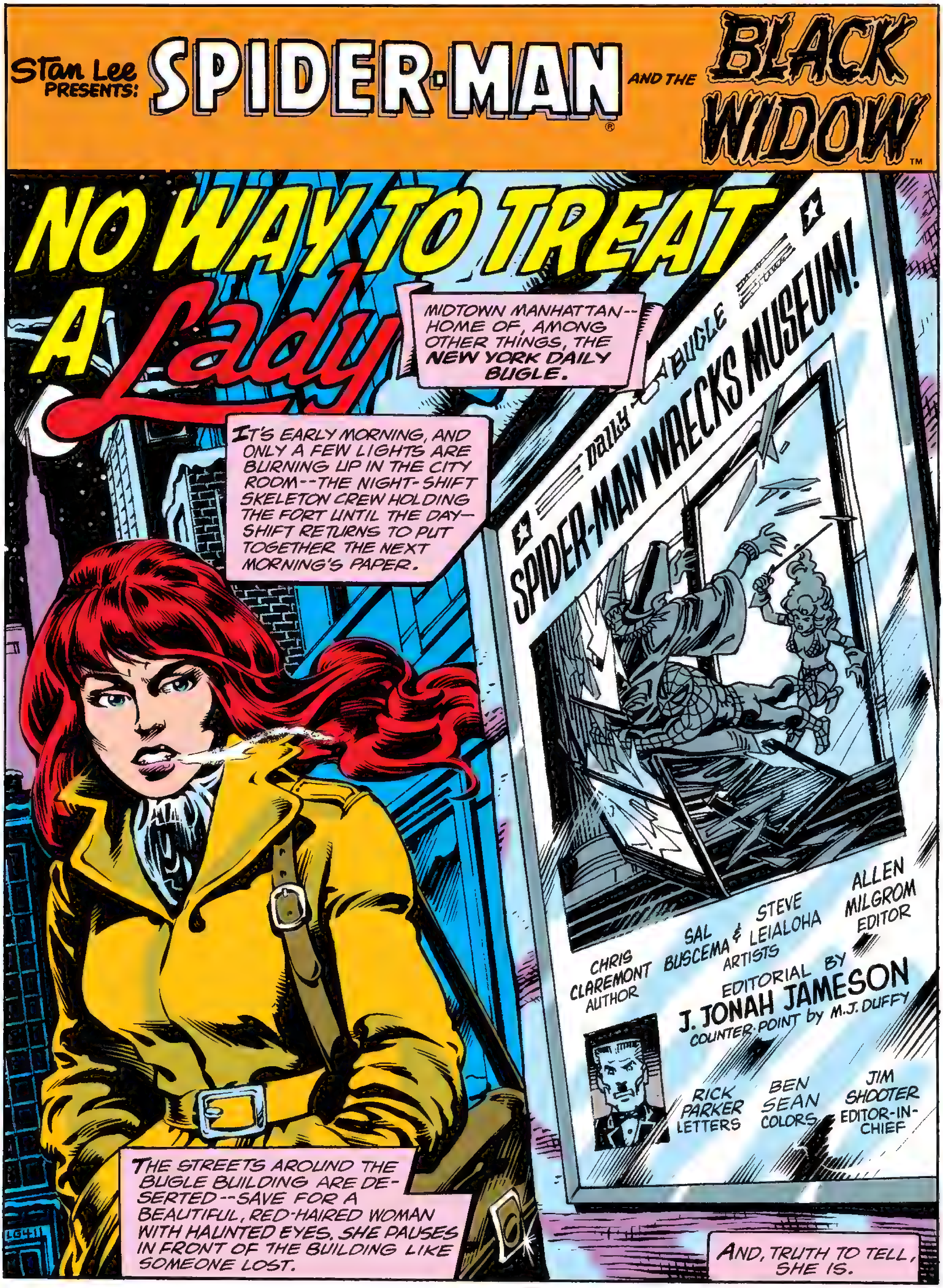
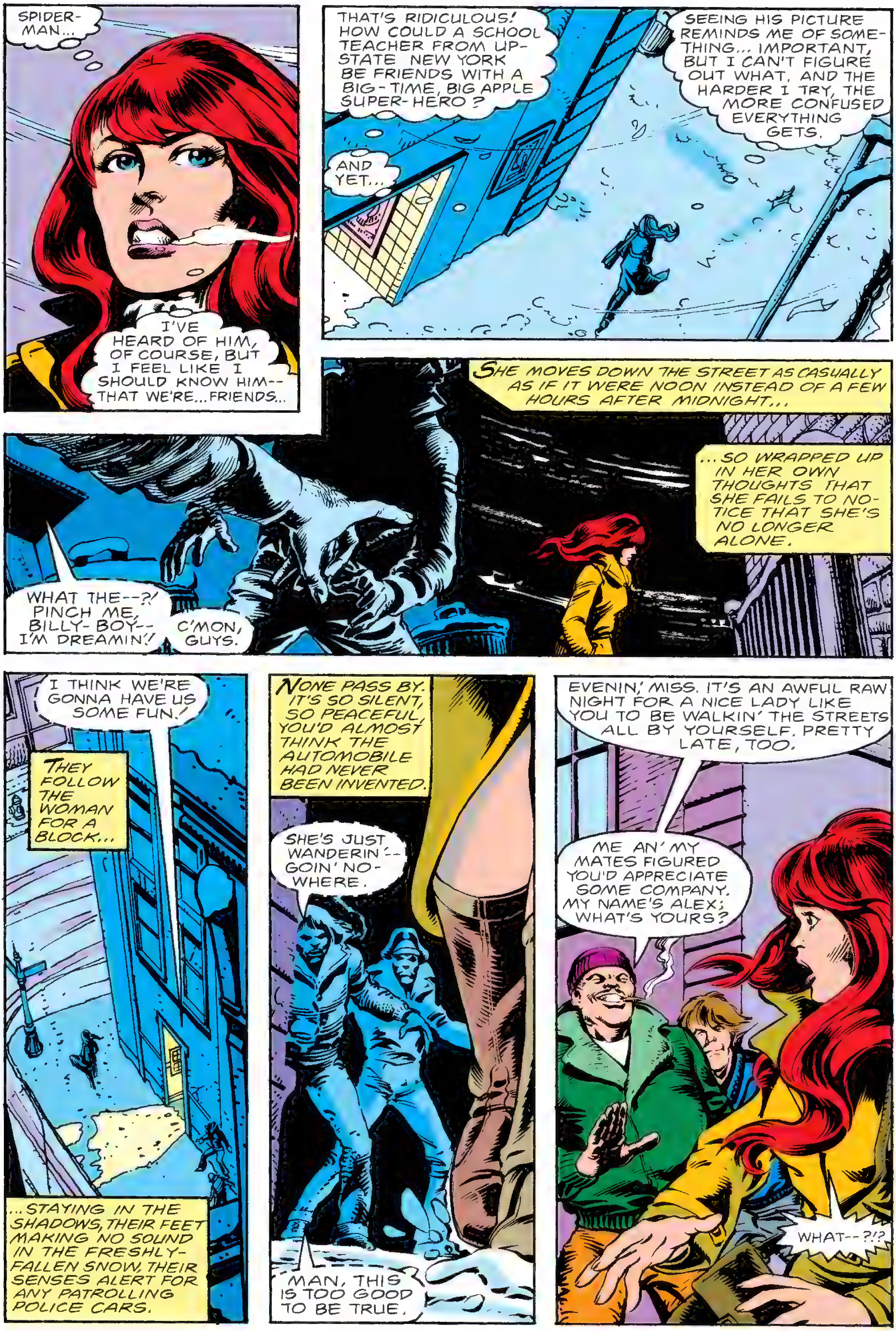
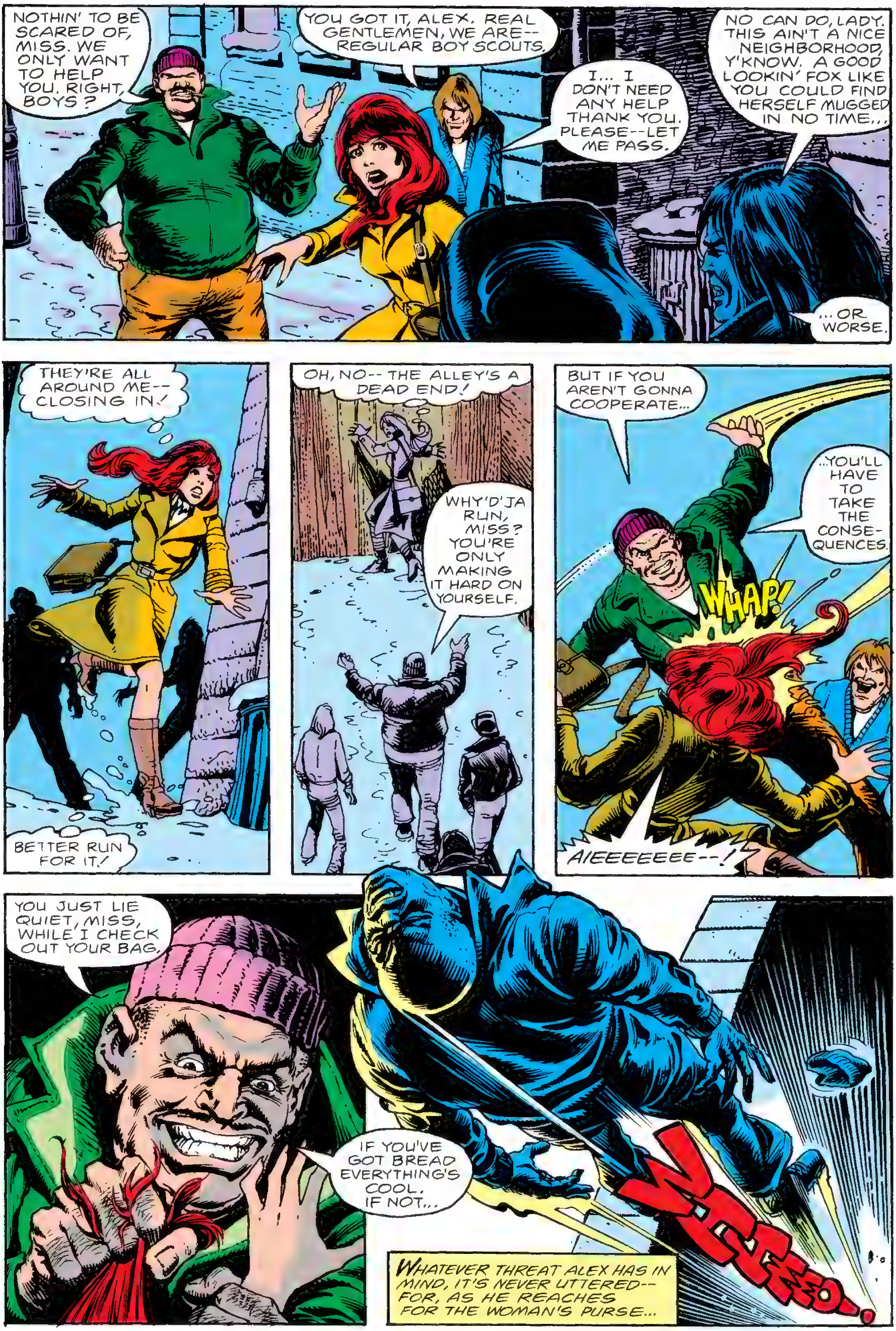
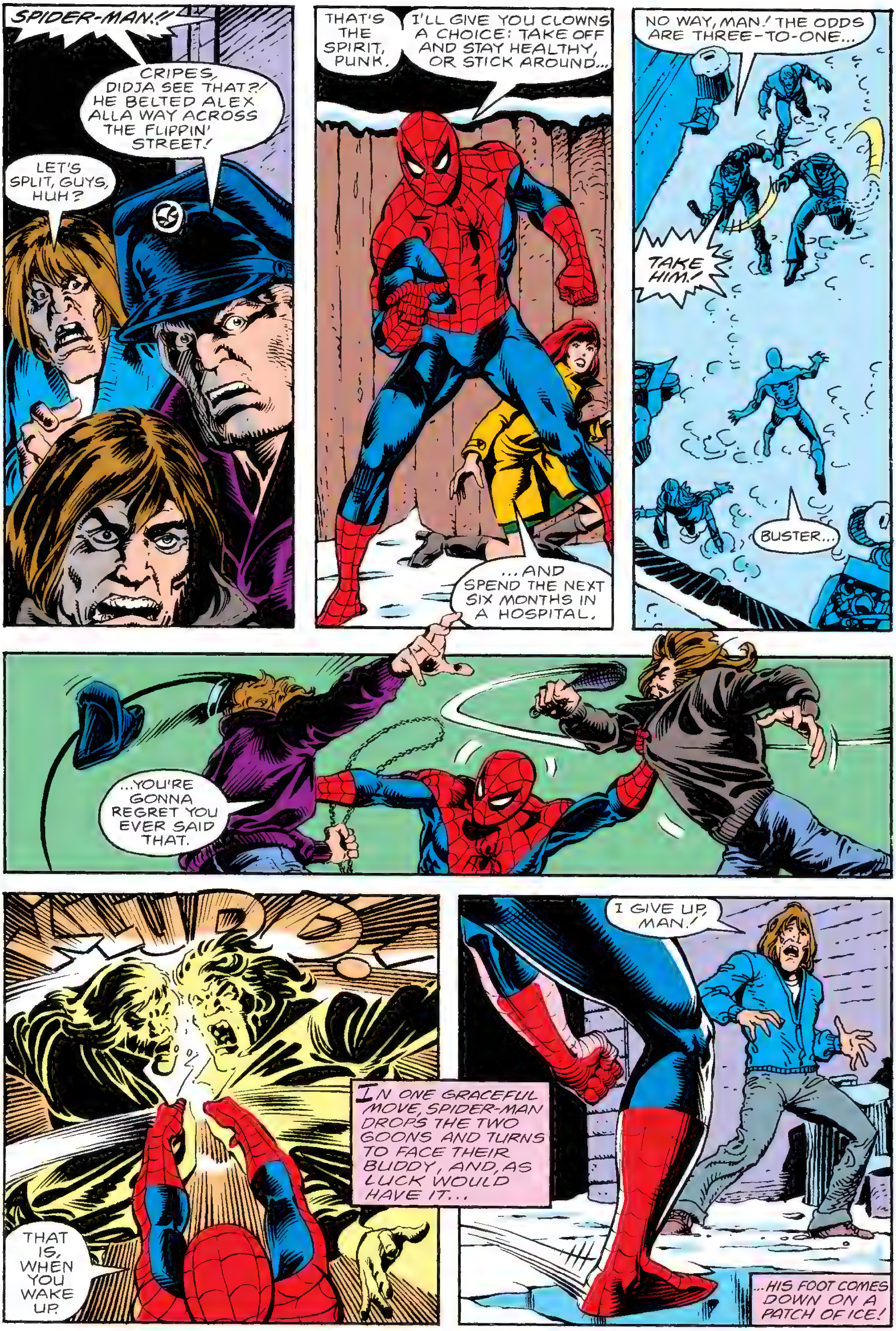
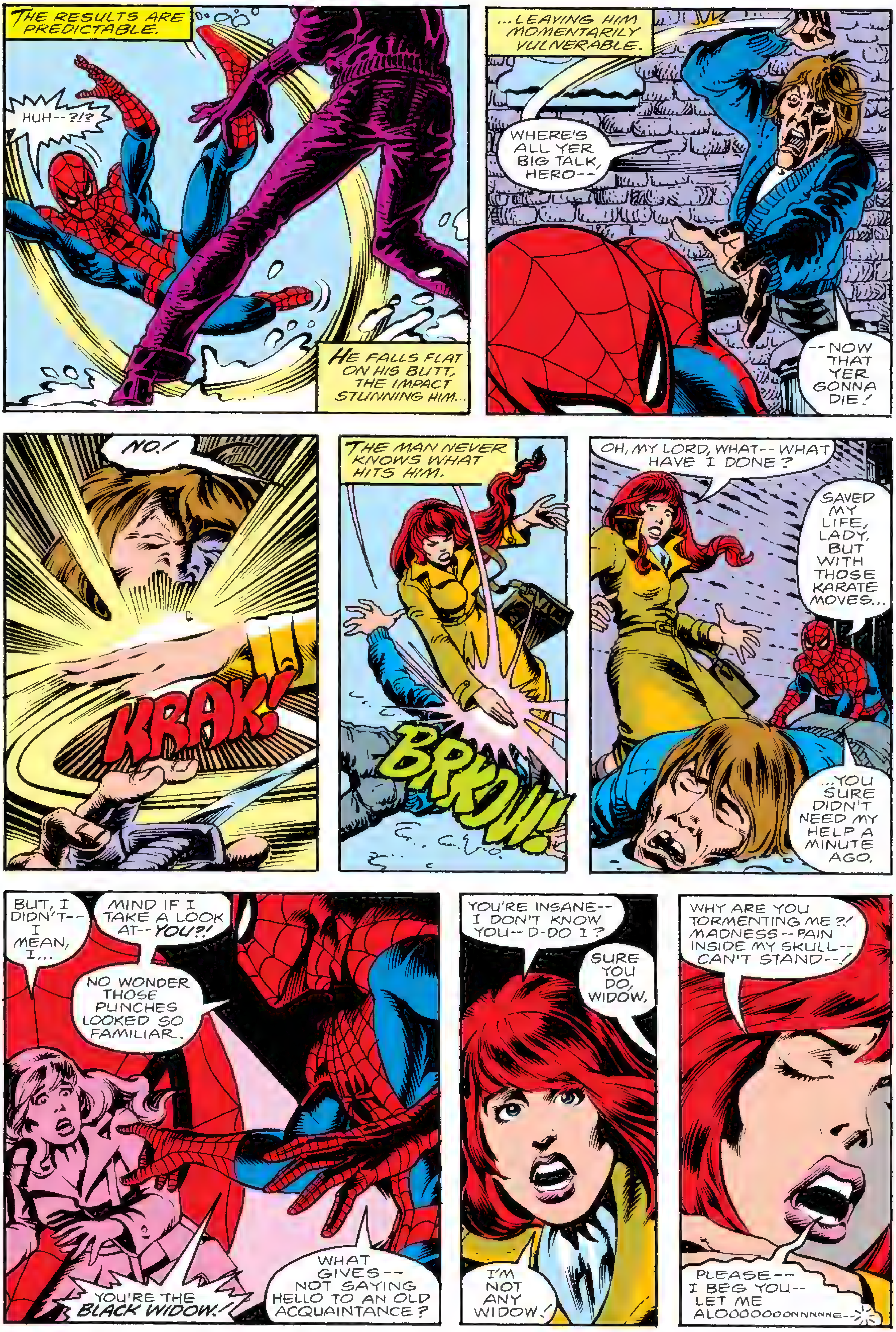
MARVEL TEAM-UP
SPIDER-MAN
AND THE
BLACK WIDOW
TM
THE WIDOW'S BEEN SHOT!
AND YOU'RE NEXT, SPIDER-MAN!
EXIT
BUCKLER & McLEOD

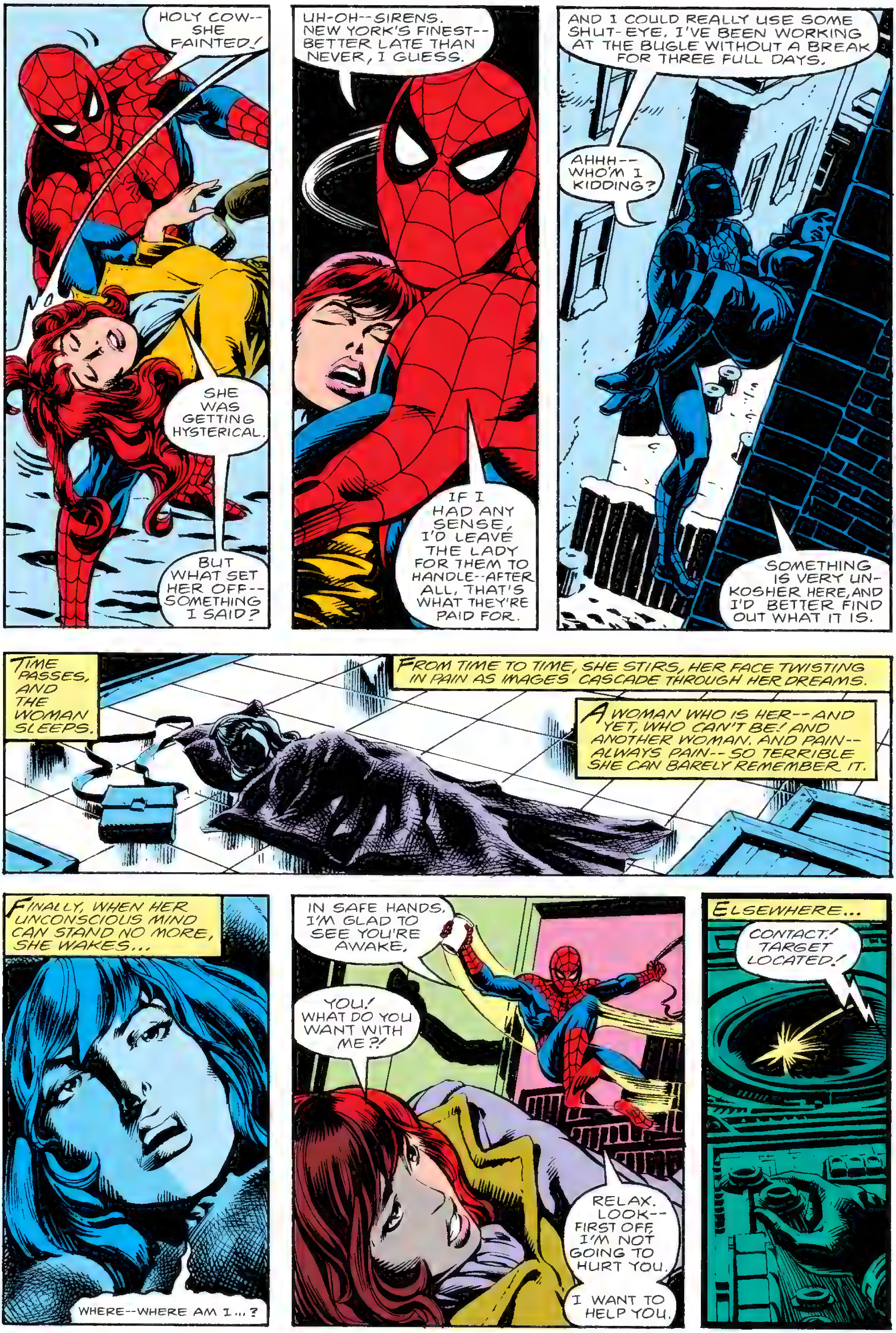

Stan Lee PRESENTS: SPIDER-MAN® AND THE BLACK WIDOW™
NO WAY TO TREAT A Lady
MIDTOWN MANHATTAN--HOME OF, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE NEW YORK DAILY BUGLE.
IT'S EARLY MORNING, AND ONLY A FEW LIGHTS ARE BURNING UP IN THE CITY ROOM--THE NIGHT-SHIFT SKELETON CREW HOLDING THE FORT UNTIL THE DAY-SHIFT RETURNS TO PUT TOGETHER THE NEXT MORNING'S PAPER.
Daily BUGLE
SPIDER-MAN WRECKS MUSEUM!
CHRIS CLAREMONT AUTHOR
SAL BUSCEMA & STEVE LEIALOHA ARTISTS
ALLEN MILGROM EDITOR
EDITORIAL BY J. JONAH JAMESON
COUNTER-POINT by M.J. DUFFY
RICK PARKER LETTERS
BEN SEAN COLORS
JIM SHOOTER EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
THE STREETS AROUND THE BUGLE BUILDING ARE DESERTED--SAVE FOR A BEAUTIFUL, RED-HAIRED WOMAN WITH HAUNTED EYES. SHE PAUSES IN FRONT OF THE BUILDING LIKE SOMEONE LOST.
AND, TRUTH TO TELL, SHE IS.

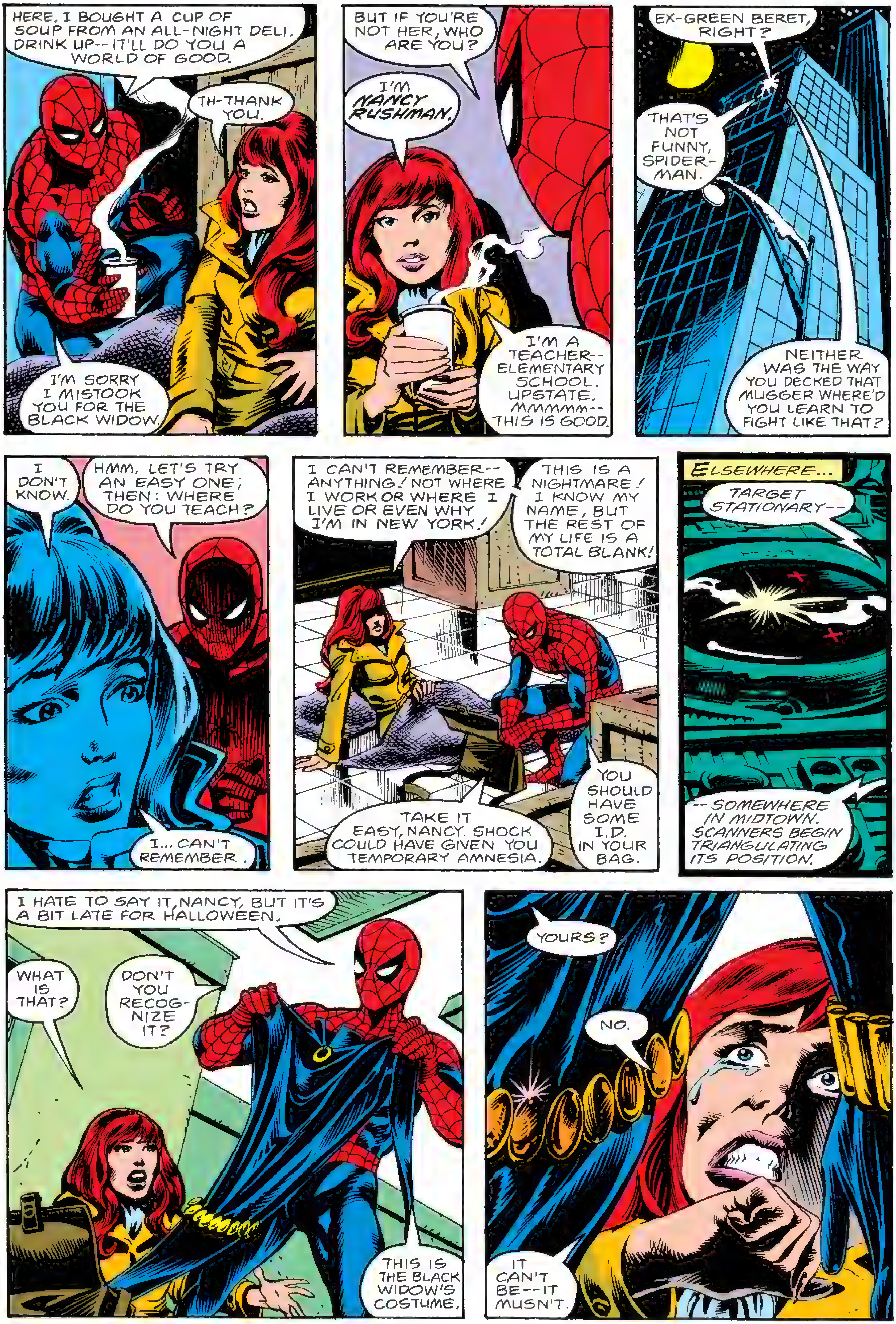

SPIDER-MAN...
I'VE HEARD OF HIM, OF COURSE, BUT I FEEL LIKE I SHOULD KNOW HIM-- THAT WE'RE...FRIENDS...
THAT'S RIDICULOUS! HOW COULD A SCHOOL TEACHER FROM UP-STATE NEW YORK BE FRIENDS WITH A BIG-TIME, BIG APPLE SUPER-HERO?
AND YET...
SEEING HIS PICTURE REMINDS ME OF SOMETHING... IMPORTANT, BUT I CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT, AND THE HARDER I TRY, THE MORE CONFUSED EVERYTHING GETS.
SHE MOVES DOWN THE STREET AS CASUALLY AS IF IT WERE NOON INSTEAD OF A FEW HOURS AFTER MIDNIGHT...
...SO WRAPPED UP IN HER OWN THOUGHTS THAT SHE FAILS TO NOTICE THAT SHE'S NO LONGER ALONE.
WHAT THE--?! PINCH ME, BILLY-BOY-- I'M DREAMIN'!
C'MON, GUYS.
I THINK WE'RE GONNA HAVE US SOME FUN!
THEY FOLLOW THE WOMAN FOR A BLOCK...
...STAYING IN THE SHADOWS, THEIR FEET MAKING NO SOUND IN THE FRESHLY-FALLEN SNOW, THEIR SENSES ALERT FOR ANY PATROLLING POLICE CARS.
NONE PASS BY. IT'S SO SILENT, SO PEACEFUL, YOU'D ALMOST THINK THE AUTOMOBILE HAD NEVER BEEN INVENTED.
SHE'S JUST WANDERIN'-- GOIN' NOWHERE.
MAN, THIS IS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE.
EVENIN', MISS. IT'S AN AWFUL RAW NIGHT FOR A NICE LADY LIKE YOU TO BE WALKIN' THE STREETS ALL BY YOURSELF. PRETTY LATE, TOO.
ME AN' MY MATES FIGURED YOU'D APPRECIATE SOME COMPANY. MY NAME'S ALEX; WHAT'S YOURS?
WHAT--?!?

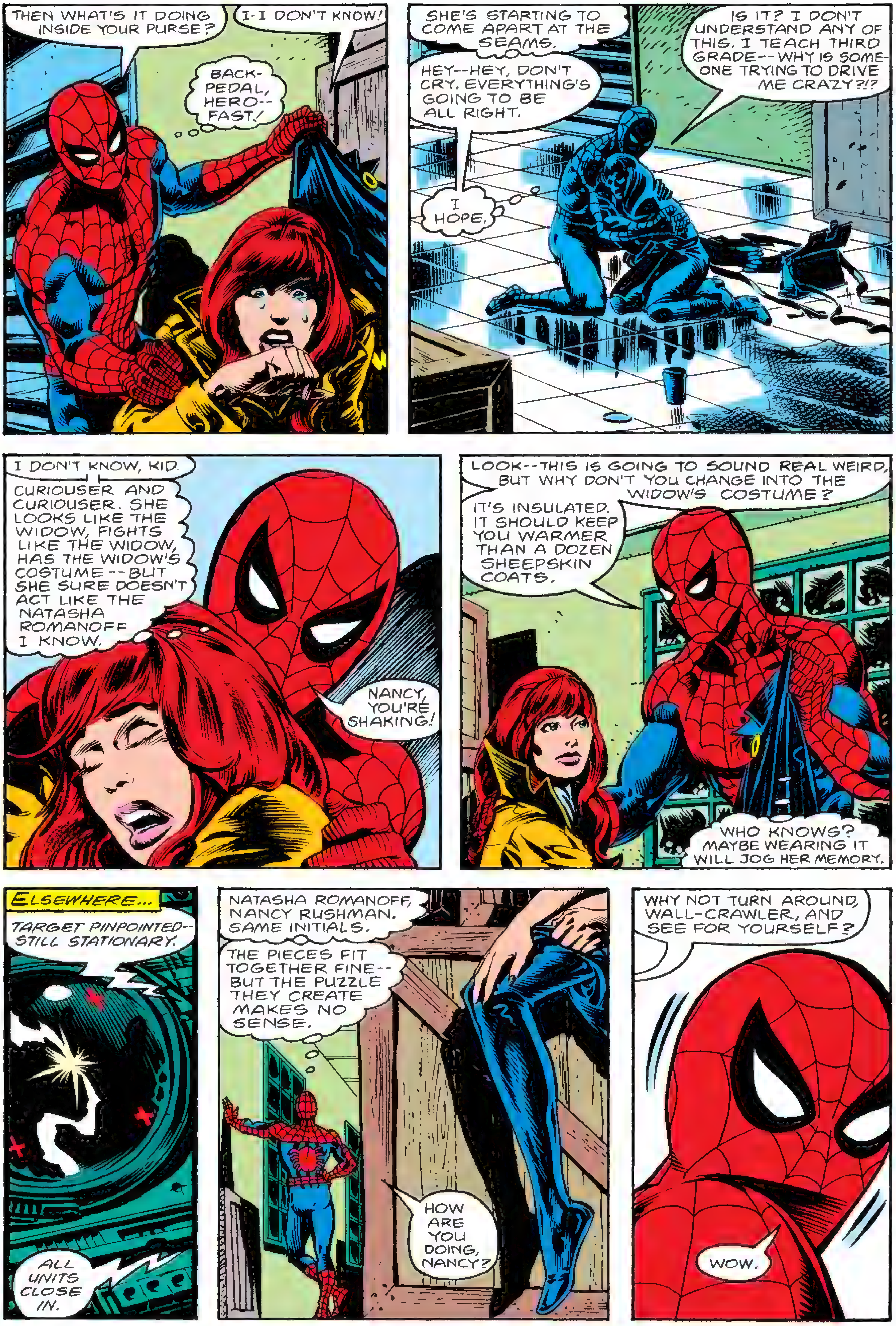

NOTHIN' TO BE SCARED OF, MISS. WE ONLY WANT TO HELP YOU. RIGHT, BOYS?
YOU GOT IT, ALEX. REAL GENTLEMEN, WE ARE-- REGULAR BOY SCOUTS.
I... I DON'T NEED ANY HELP THANK YOU. PLEASE--LET ME PASS.
NO CAN DO, LADY. THIS AIN'T A NICE NEIGHBORHOOD, Y'KNOW. A GOOD LOOKIN' FOX LIKE YOU COULD FIND HERSELF MUGGED IN NO TIME...
...OR WORSE.
THEY'RE ALL AROUND ME-- CLOSING IN!
BETTER RUN FOR IT!
OH, NO-- THE ALLEY'S A DEAD END!
WHY'D'JA RUN, MISS? YOU'RE ONLY MAKING IT HARD ON YOURSELF.
BUT IF YOU AREN'T GONNA COOPERATE...
...YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE THE CONSEQUENCES.
WHAP!
AIEEEEEEE--!
YOU JUST LIE QUIET, MISS, WHILE I CHECK OUT YOUR BAG.
IF YOU'VE GOT BREAD EVERYTHING'S COOL. IF NOT...
WHATEVER THREAT ALEX HAS IN MIND, IT'S NEVER UTTERED-- FOR, AS HE REACHES FOR THE WOMAN'S PURSE...
WHOOO!

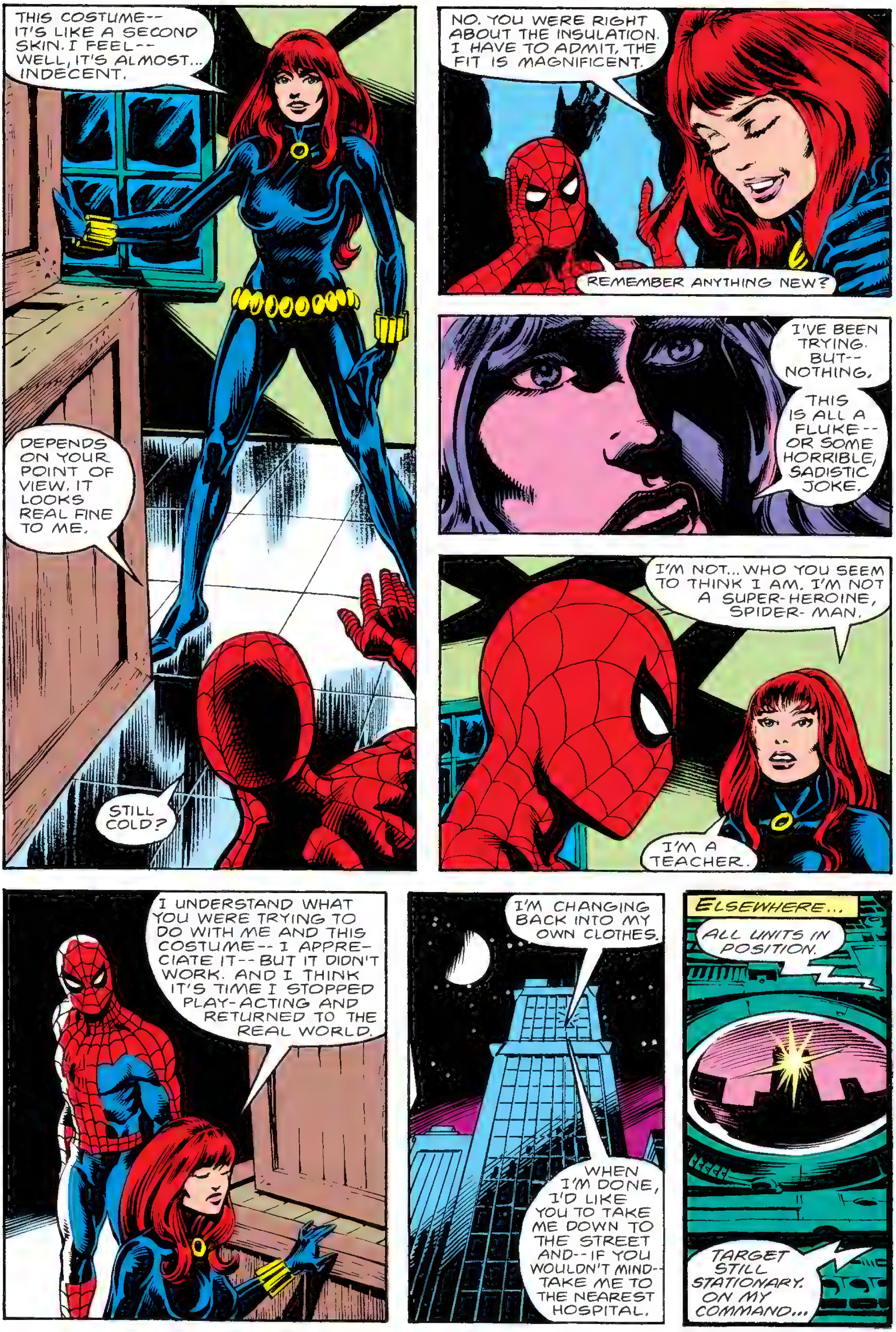

SPIDER-MAN!!
CRIPES, DIDJA SEE THAT?! HE BELTED ALEX ALLA WAY ACROSS THE FLIPPIN' STREET!
LET'S SPLIT, GUYS, HUH?
THAT'S THE SPIRIT, PUNK.
I'LL GIVE YOU CLOWNS A CHOICE: TAKE OFF AND STAY HEALTHY, OR STICK AROUND...
...AND SPEND THE NEXT SIX MONTHS IN A HOSPITAL.
NO WAY, MAN! THE ODDS ARE THREE-TO-ONE...
TAKE HIM!
BUSTER...
...YOU'RE GONNA REGRET YOU EVER SAID THAT.
THUD
THAT IS, WHEN YOU WAKE UP.
IN ONE GRACEFUL MOVE, SPIDER-MAN DROPS THE TWO GOONS AND TURNS TO FACE THEIR BUDDY, AND, AS LUCK WOULD HAVE IT...
I GIVE UP, MAN!
...HIS FOOT COMES DOWN ON A PATCH OF ICE!

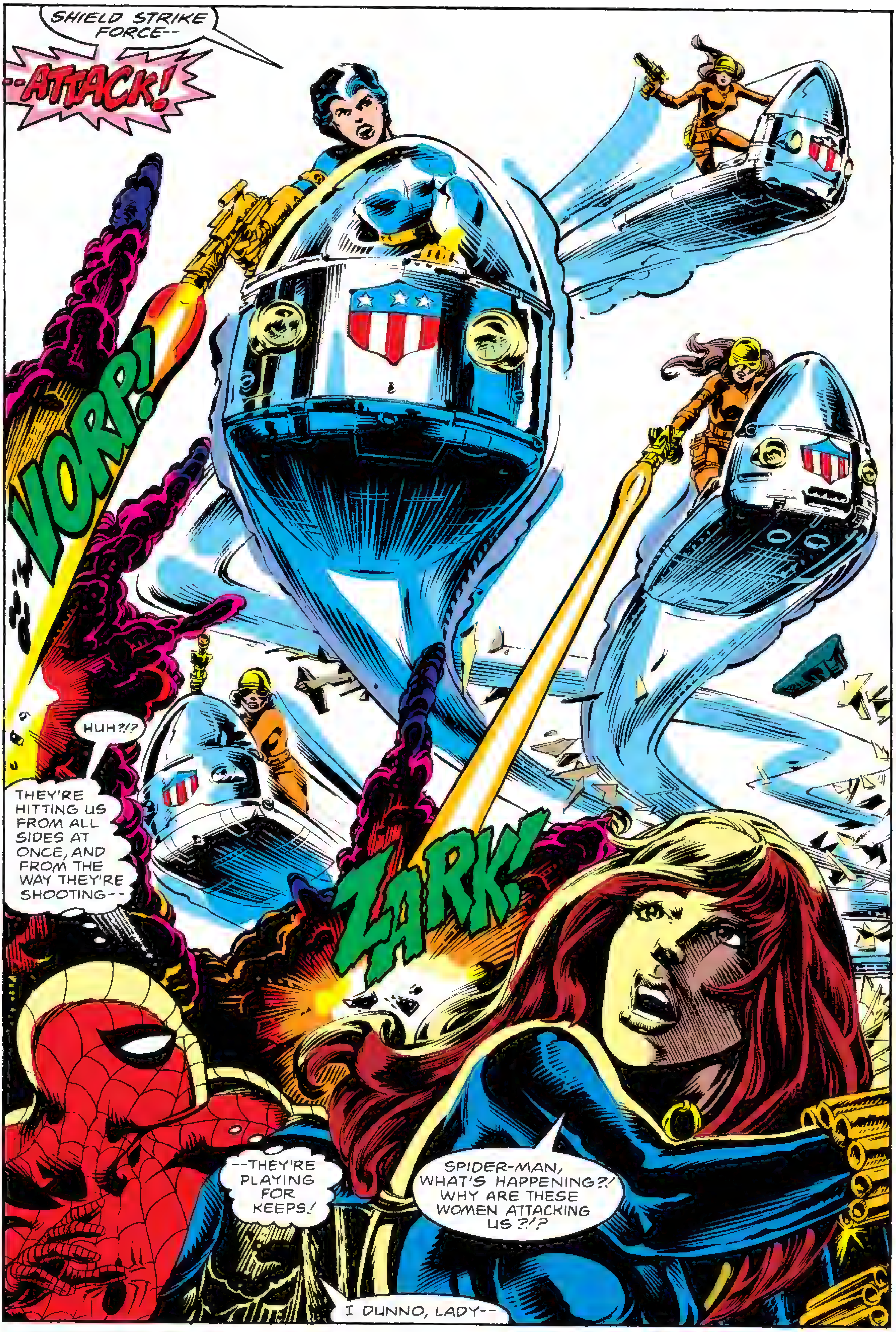

THE RESULTS ARE PREDICTABLE.
HUH--?!?
HE FALLS FLAT ON HIS BUTT, THE IMPACT STUNNING HIM...
...LEAVING HIM MOMENTARILY VULNERABLE.
WHERE'S ALL YER BIG TALK, HERO--
--NOW THAT YER GONNA DIE!
NO!
KRAK!
THE MAN NEVER KNOWS WHAT HITS HIM.
BRKOW!!
OH, MY LORD, WHAT-- WHAT HAVE I DONE?
SAVED MY LIFE, LADY, BUT WITH THOSE KARATE MOVES...
...YOU SURE DIDN'T NEED MY HELP A MINUTE AGO.
BUT, I DIDN'T-- I MEAN, I...
MIND IF I TAKE A LOOK AT--YOU?!
NO WONDER THOSE PUNCHES LOOKED SO FAMILIAR.
YOU'RE THE BLACK WIDOW!
WHAT GIVES-- NOT SAYING HELLO TO AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE?
YOU'RE INSANE-- I DON'T KNOW YOU-- D-DO I?
SURE YOU DO, WIDOW.
I'M NOT ANY WIDOW!
WHY ARE YOU TORMENTING ME?! MADNESS--PAIN INSIDE MY SKULL-- CAN'T STAND--!
PLEASE-- I BEG YOU-- LET ME ALOOOOOOOONNNNNE--

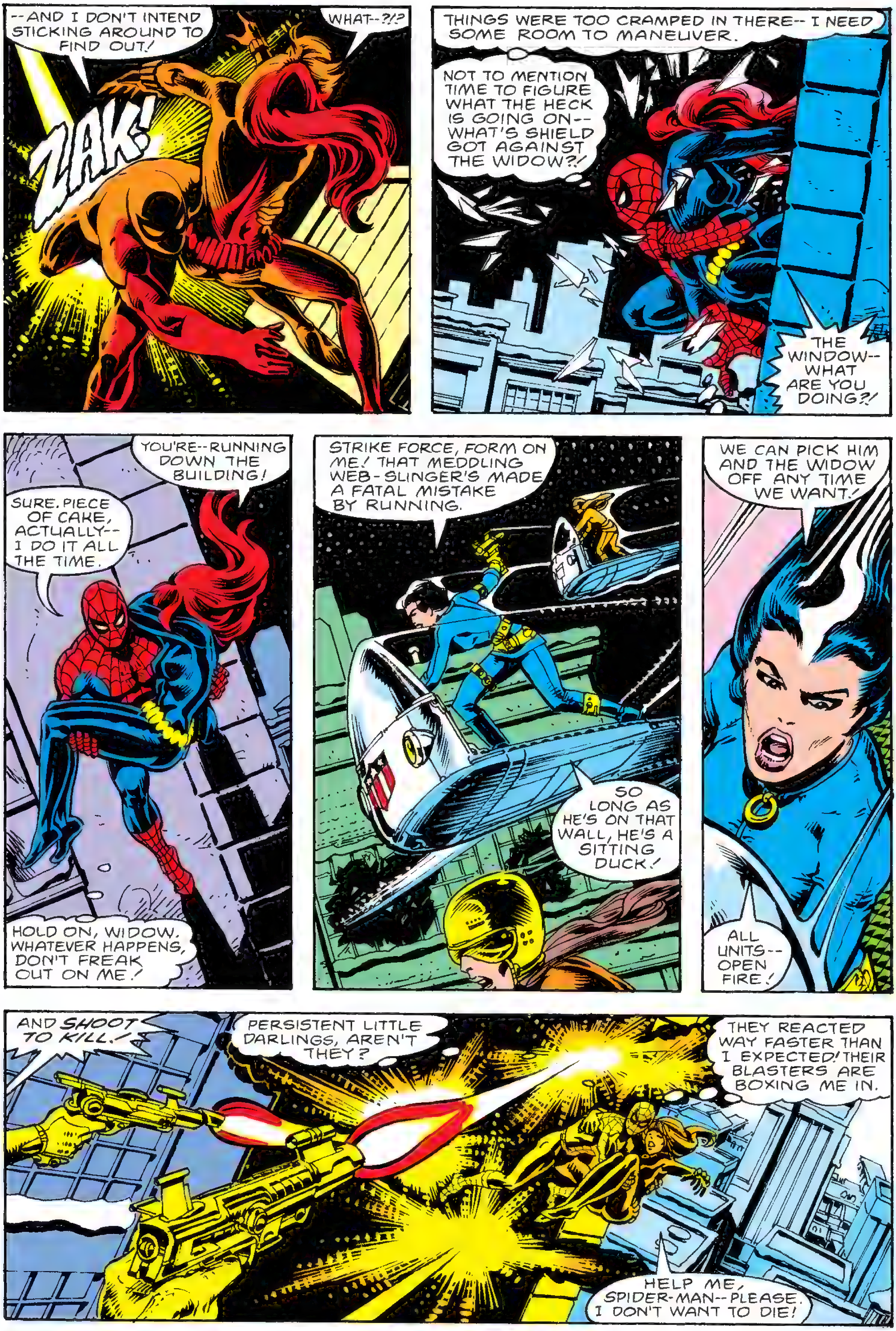

HOLY COW--SHE FAINTED!
SHE WAS GETTING HYSTERICAL.
BUT WHAT SET HER OFF--SOMETHING I SAID?
UH-OH--SIRENS. NEW YORK'S FINEST--BETTER LATE THAN NEVER, I GUESS.
IF I HAD ANY SENSE, I'D LEAVE THE LADY FOR THEM TO HANDLE--AFTER ALL, THAT'S WHAT THEY'RE PAID FOR.
AND I COULD REALLY USE SOME SHUT-EYE. I'VE BEEN WORKING AT THE BUGLE WITHOUT A BREAK FOR THREE FULL DAYS.
AHHH--WHO'M I KIDDING?
SOMETHING IS VERY UNKOSHER HERE, AND I'D BETTER FIND OUT WHAT IT IS.
TIME PASSES, AND THE WOMAN SLEEPS.
FROM TIME TO TIME, SHE STIRS, HER FACE TWISTING IN PAIN AS IMAGES CASCADE THROUGH HER DREAMS.
A WOMAN WHO IS HER--AND YET, WHO CAN'T BE! AND ANOTHER WOMAN. AND PAIN--ALWAYS PAIN--SO TERRIBLE SHE CAN BARELY REMEMBER IT.
FINALLY, WHEN HER UNCONSCIOUS MIND CAN STAND NO MORE, SHE WAKES...
WHERE--WHERE AM I...?
IN SAFE HANDS. I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU'RE AWAKE.
YOU! WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH ME?!
RELAX. LOOK--FIRST OFF, I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOU.
I WANT TO HELP YOU.
ELSEWHERE...
CONTACT! TARGET LOCATED!

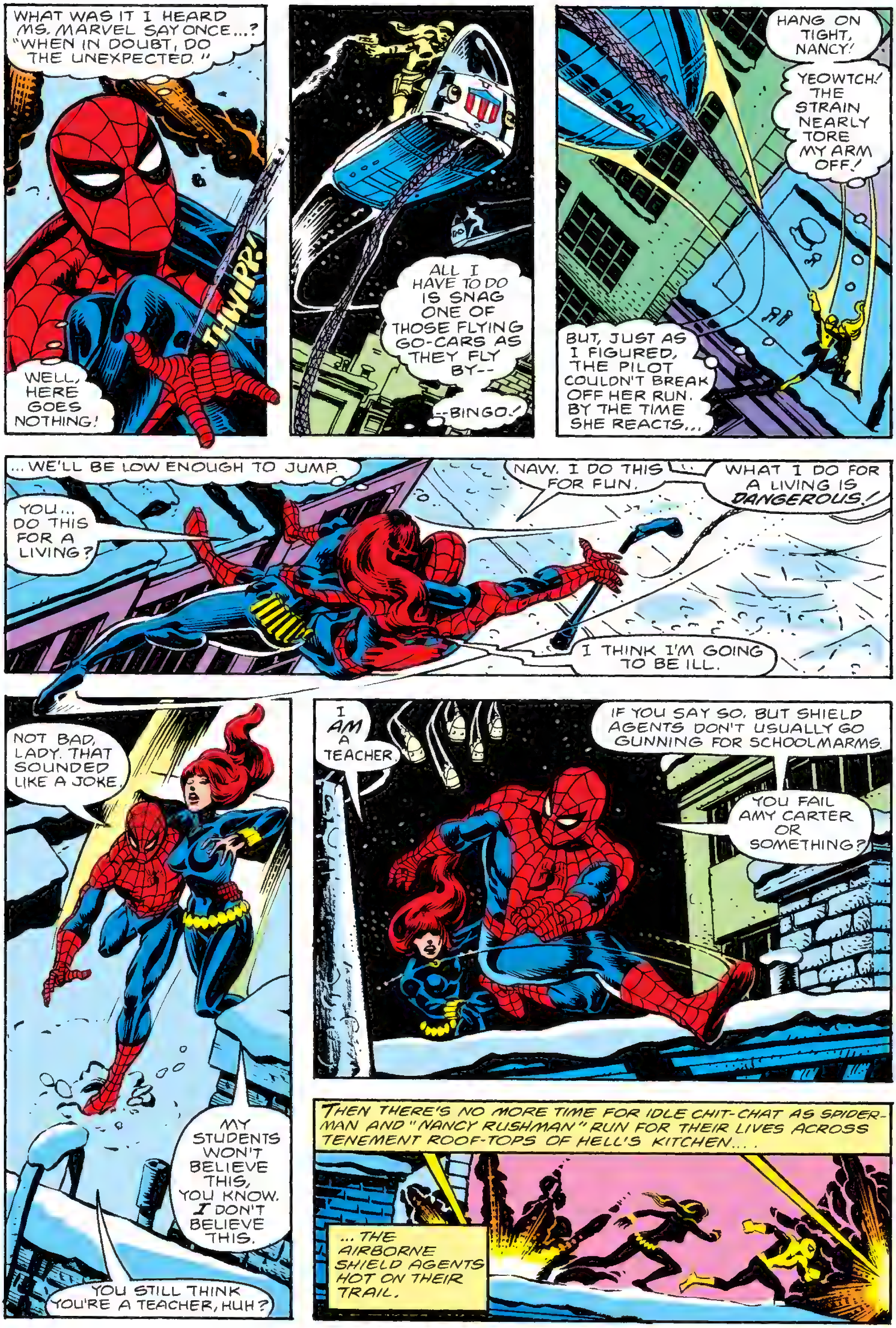

HERE. I BOUGHT A CUP OF SOUP FROM AN ALL-NIGHT DELI. DRINK UP-- IT'LL DO YOU A WORLD OF GOOD.
TH-THANK YOU.
I'M SORRY I MISTOOK YOU FOR THE BLACK WIDOW.
BUT IF YOU'RE NOT HER, WHO ARE YOU?
I'M *NANCY RUSHMAN.*
I'M A TEACHER-- ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. UPSTATE. MMMMM-- THIS IS GOOD.
EX-GREEN BERET, RIGHT?
THAT'S NOT FUNNY, SPIDER-MAN.
NEITHER WAS THE WAY YOU DECKED THAT MUGGER. WHERE'D YOU LEARN TO FIGHT LIKE THAT?
I DON'T KNOW.
HMM, LET'S TRY AN EASY ONE; THEN: WHERE DO YOU TEACH?
I... CAN'T REMEMBER.
I CAN'T REMEMBER-- ANYTHING! NOT WHERE I WORK OR WHERE I LIVE OR EVEN WHY I'M IN NEW YORK!
THIS IS A NIGHTMARE! I KNOW MY NAME, BUT THE REST OF MY LIFE IS A TOTAL BLANK!
TAKE IT EASY, NANCY. SHOCK COULD HAVE GIVEN YOU TEMPORARY AMNESIA.
YOU SHOULD HAVE SOME I.D. IN YOUR BAG.
ELSEWHERE...
TARGET STATIONARY--
--SOMEWHERE IN MIDTOWN. SCANNERS BEGIN TRIANGULATING ITS POSITION.
I HATE TO SAY IT, NANCY, BUT IT'S A BIT LATE FOR HALLOWEEN.
WHAT IS THAT?
DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE IT?
THIS IS THE BLACK WIDOW'S COSTUME.
YOURS?
NO.
IT CAN'T BE-- IT MUSN'T.

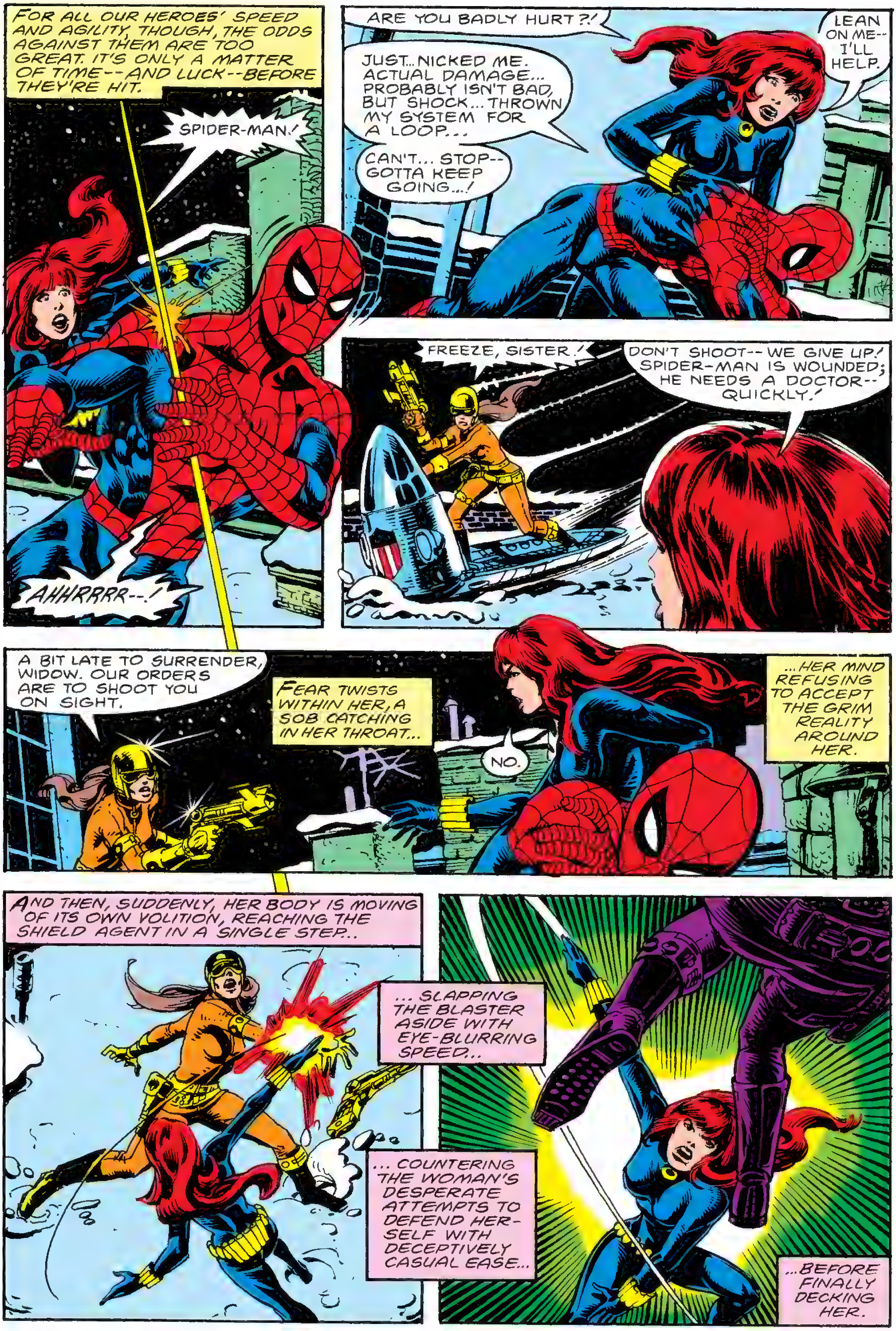

THEN WHAT'S IT DOING INSIDE YOUR PURSE?
I-I DON'T KNOW!
BACKPEDAL, HERO-- FAST!
SHE'S STARTING TO COME APART AT THE SEAMS.
HEY--HEY, DON'T CRY. EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT.
I HOPE.
IS IT? I DON'T UNDERSTAND ANY OF THIS. I TEACH THIRD GRADE--WHY IS SOMEONE TRYING TO DRIVE ME CRAZY?!?
I DON'T KNOW, KID.
CURIOUSER AND CURIOUSER. SHE LOOKS LIKE THE WIDOW, FIGHTS LIKE THE WIDOW, HAS THE WIDOW'S COSTUME--BUT SHE SURE DOESN'T ACT LIKE THE NATASHA ROMANOFF I KNOW.
NANCY, YOU'RE SHAKING!
LOOK--THIS IS GOING TO SOUND REAL WEIRD, BUT WHY DON'T YOU CHANGE INTO THE WIDOW'S COSTUME?
IT'S INSULATED. IT SHOULD KEEP YOU WARMER THAN A DOZEN SHEEPSKIN COATS.
WHO KNOWS? MAYBE WEARING IT WILL JOG HER MEMORY.
ELSEWHERE...
TARGET PINPOINTED-- STILL STATIONARY.
ALL UNITS CLOSE IN.
NATASHA ROMANOFF, NANCY RUSHMAN. SAME INITIALS.
THE PIECES FIT TOGETHER FINE-- BUT THE PUZZLE THEY CREATE MAKES NO SENSE.
HOW ARE YOU DOING, NANCY?
WHY NOT TURN AROUND, WALL-CRAWLER, AND SEE FOR YOURSELF?
WOW.

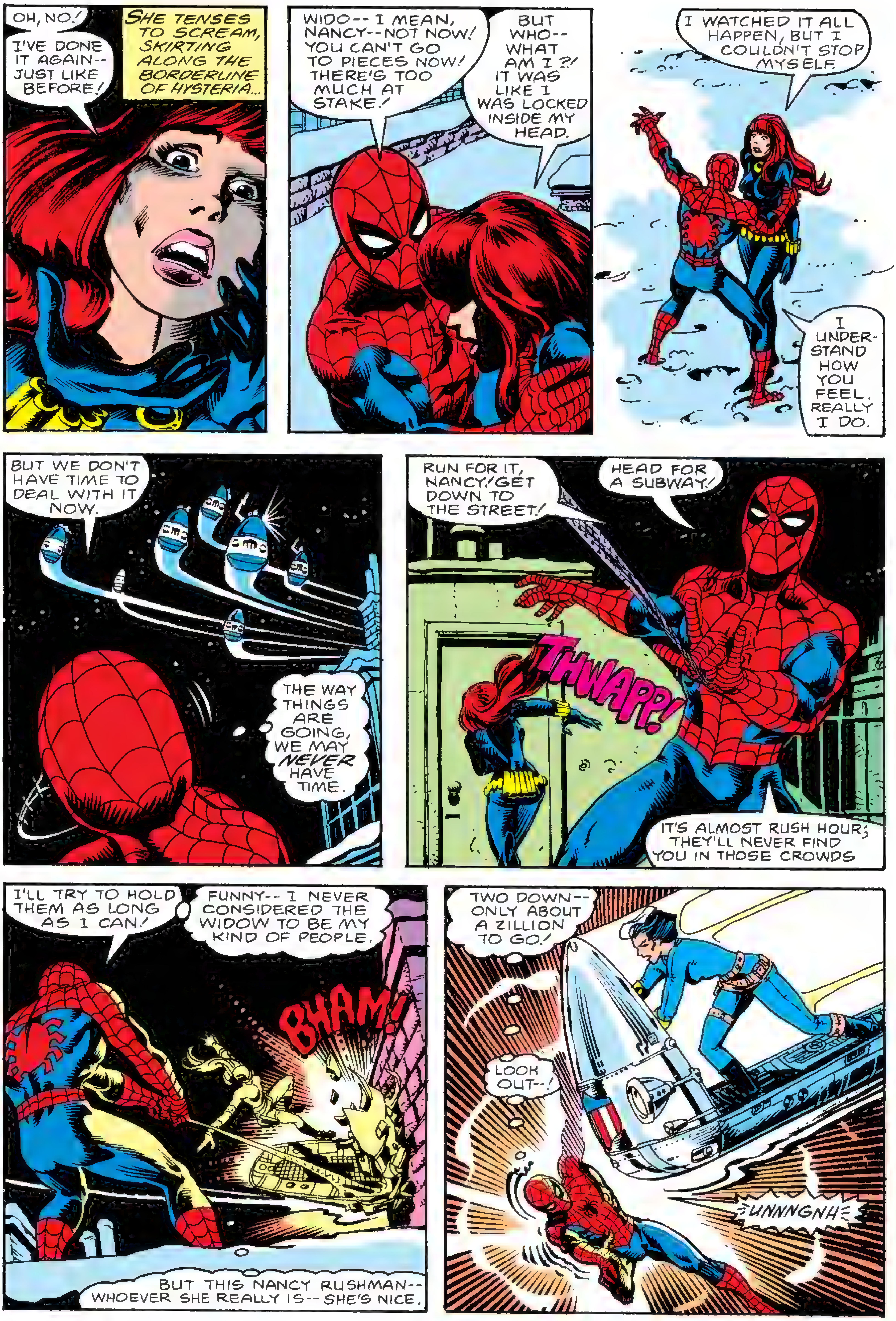

THIS COSTUME-- IT'S LIKE A SECOND SKIN. I FEEL-- WELL, IT'S ALMOST... INDECENT.
DEPENDS ON YOUR POINT OF VIEW. IT LOOKS REAL FINE TO ME.
STILL COLD?
NO. YOU WERE RIGHT ABOUT THE INSULATION. I HAVE TO ADMIT, THE FIT IS MAGNIFICENT.
REMEMBER ANYTHING NEW?
I'VE BEEN TRYING. BUT-- NOTHING.
THIS IS ALL A FLUKE-- OR SOME HORRIBLE, SADISTIC JOKE.
I'M NOT... WHO YOU SEEM TO THINK I AM. I'M NOT A SUPER-HEROINE, SPIDER-MAN.
I'M A TEACHER.
I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU WERE TRYING TO DO WITH ME AND THIS COSTUME-- I APPRECIATE IT-- BUT IT DIDN'T WORK. AND I THINK IT'S TIME I STOPPED PLAY-ACTING AND RETURNED TO THE REAL WORLD.
I'M CHANGING BACK INTO MY OWN CLOTHES.
WHEN I'M DONE, I'D LIKE YOU TO TAKE ME DOWN TO THE STREET AND-- IF YOU WOULDN'T MIND-- TAKE ME TO THE NEAREST HOSPITAL.
ELSEWHERE...
ALL UNITS IN POSITION.
TARGET STILL STATIONARY. ON MY COMMAND...

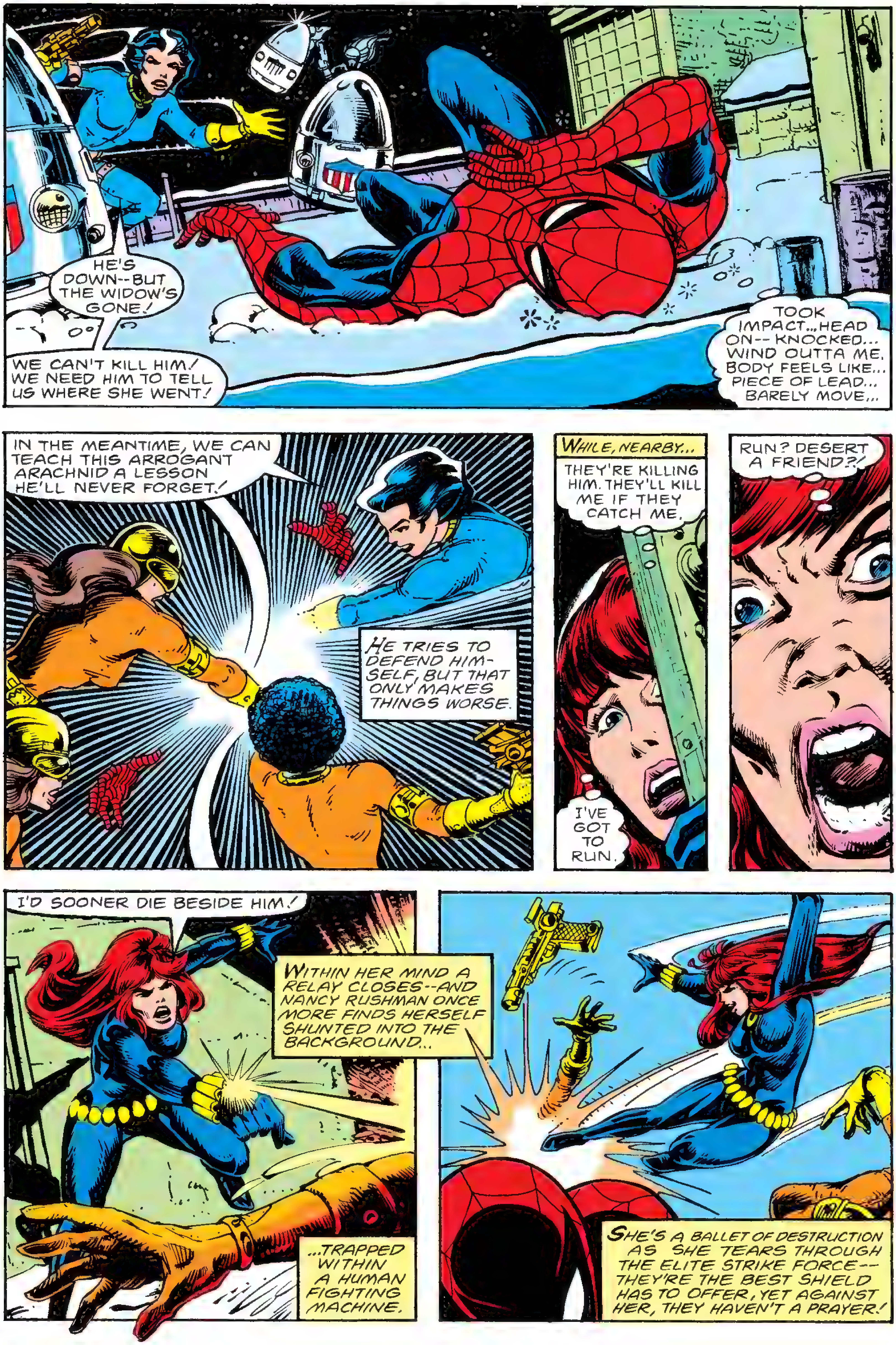

SHIELD STRIKE FORCE--
--ATTACK!
VORP!
HUH?!?
THEY'RE HITTING US FROM ALL SIDES AT ONCE, AND FROM THE WAY THEY'RE SHOOTING--
ZARK!
--THEY'RE PLAYING FOR KEEPS!
SPIDER-MAN, WHAT'S HAPPENING?! WHY ARE THESE WOMEN ATTACKING US?!?
I DUNNO, LADY--

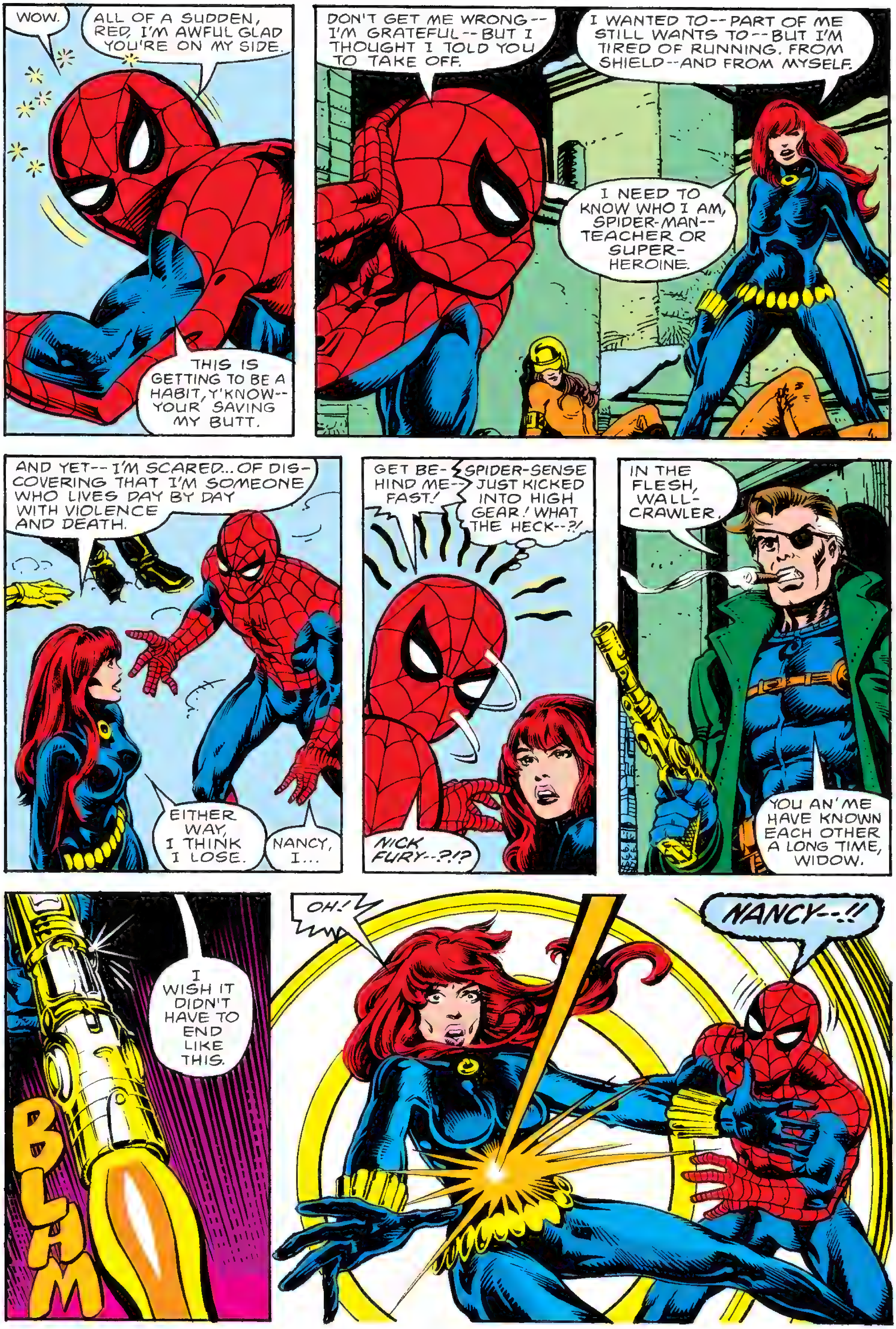

--AND I DON'T INTEND STICKING AROUND TO FIND OUT!
WHAT--?!?
ZAK!
THINGS WERE TOO CRAMPED IN THERE-- I NEED SOME ROOM TO MANEUVER.
NOT TO MENTION TIME TO FIGURE WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON-- WHAT'S SHIELD GOT AGAINST THE WIDOW?!
THE WINDOW-- WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
YOU'RE--RUNNING DOWN THE BUILDING!
SURE. PIECE OF CAKE, ACTUALLY-- I DO IT ALL THE TIME.
HOLD ON, WIDOW. WHATEVER HAPPENS, DON'T FREAK OUT ON ME!
STRIKE FORCE, FORM ON ME! THAT MEDDLING WEB-SLINGER'S MADE A FATAL MISTAKE BY RUNNING.
SO LONG AS HE'S ON THAT WALL, HE'S A SITTING DUCK!
WE CAN PICK HIM AND THE WIDOW OFF ANY TIME WE WANT!
ALL UNITS-- OPEN FIRE!
AND SHOOT TO KILL!
PERSISTENT LITTLE DARLINGS, AREN'T THEY?
THEY REACTED WAY FASTER THAN I EXPECTED! THEIR BLASTERS ARE BOXING ME IN.
HELP ME, SPIDER-MAN-- PLEASE. I DON'T WANT TO DIE!

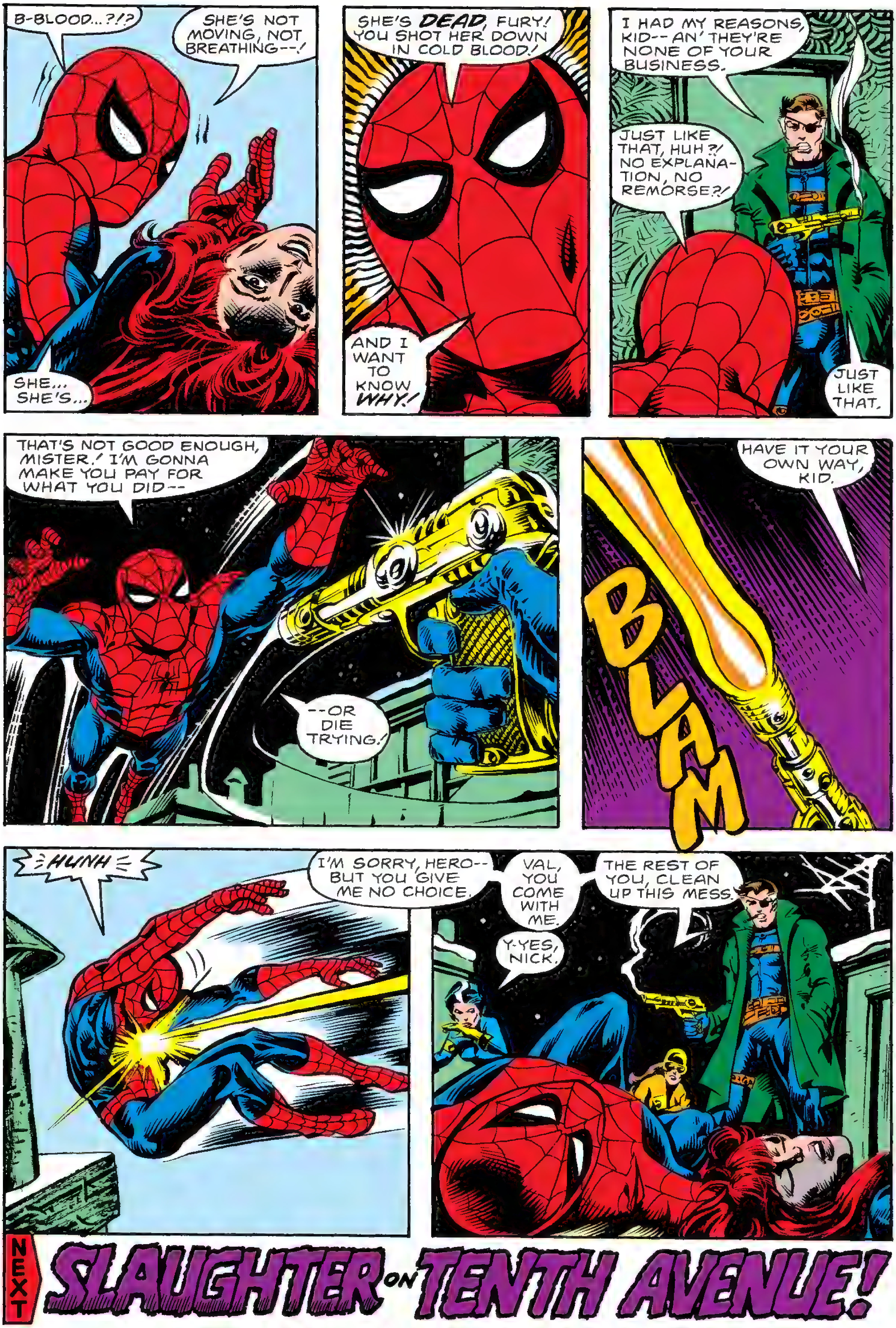

WHAT WAS IT I HEARD MS. MARVEL SAY ONCE...? "WHEN IN DOUBT, DO THE UNEXPECTED."
THWIPP!
WELL, HERE GOES NOTHING!
ALL I HAVE TO DO IS SNAG ONE OF THOSE FLYING GO-CARS AS THEY FLY BY--
--BINGO!
HANG ON TIGHT, NANCY!
YEOWTCH! THE STRAIN NEARLY TORE MY ARM OFF!
BUT, JUST AS I FIGURED, THE PILOT COULDN'T BREAK OFF HER RUN. BY THE TIME SHE REACTS...
...WE'LL BE LOW ENOUGH TO JUMP.
YOU... DO THIS FOR A LIVING?
NAW. I DO THIS FOR FUN.
WHAT I DO FOR A LIVING IS DANGEROUS!
I THINK I'M GOING TO BE ILL.
NOT BAD, LADY. THAT SOUNDED LIKE A JOKE.
MY STUDENTS WON'T BELIEVE THIS, YOU KNOW. I DON'T BELIEVE THIS.
YOU STILL THINK YOU'RE A TEACHER, HUH?
I AM A TEACHER.
IF YOU SAY SO, BUT SHIELD AGENTS DON'T USUALLY GO GUNNING FOR SCHOOLMARMS.
YOU FAIL AMY CARTER OR SOMETHING?
THEN THERE'S NO MORE TIME FOR IDLE CHIT-CHAT AS SPIDER-MAN AND "NANCY RUSHMAN" RUN FOR THEIR LIVES ACROSS TENEMENT ROOF-TOPS OF HELL'S KITCHEN...
...THE AIRBORNE SHIELD AGENTS HOT ON THEIR TRAIL.

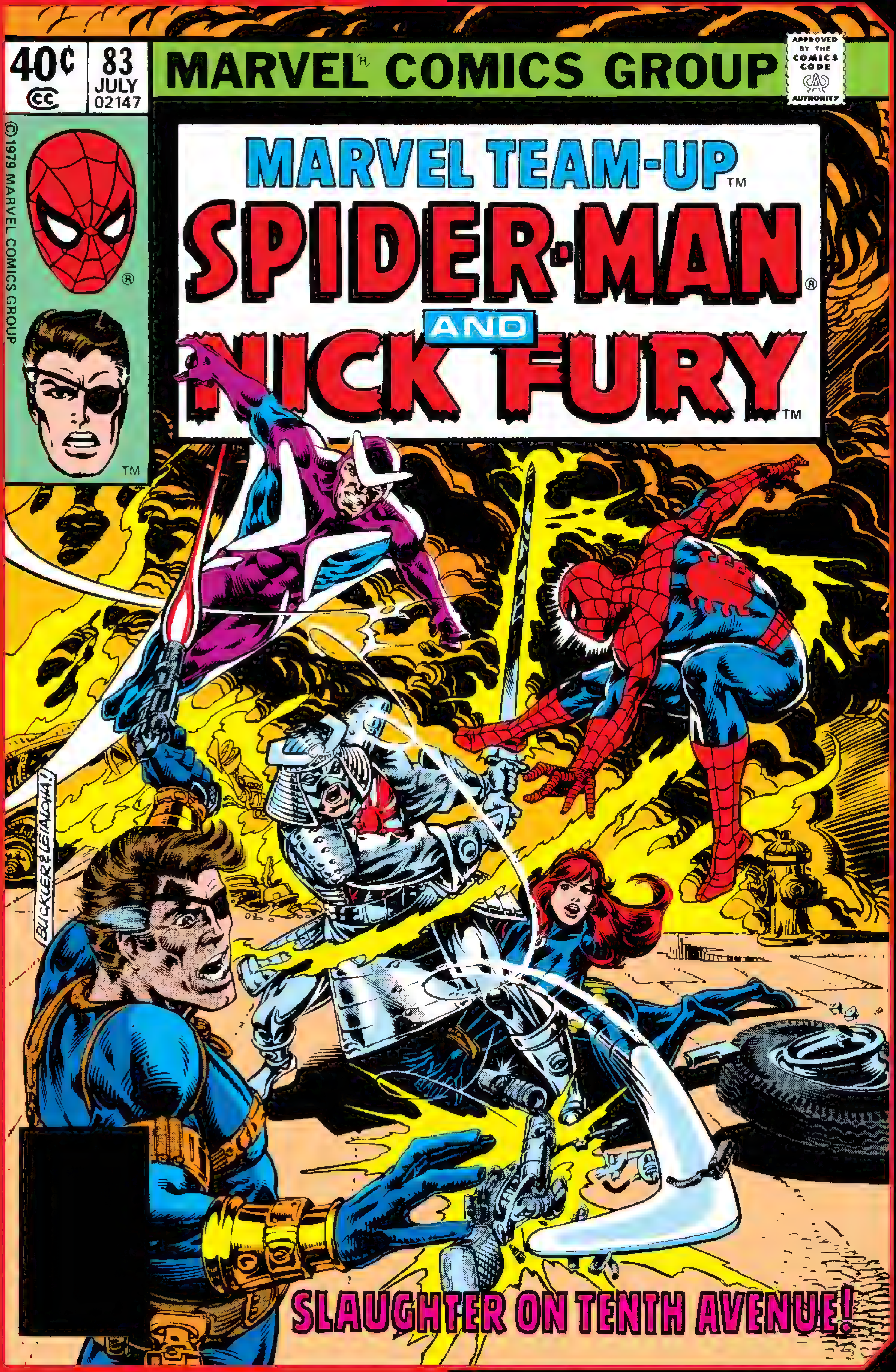

FOR ALL OUR HEROES' SPEED AND AGILITY, THOUGH, THE ODDS AGAINST THEM ARE TOO GREAT. IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME--AND LUCK--BEFORE THEY'RE HIT.
SPIDER-MAN!
AHHRRRR--!
ARE YOU BADLY HURT?!
JUST...NICKED ME. ACTUAL DAMAGE... PROBABLY ISN'T BAD, BUT SHOCK...THROWN MY SYSTEM FOR A LOOP...
CAN'T... STOP-- GOTTA KEEP GOING...!
LEAN ON ME-- I'LL HELP.
FREEZE, SISTER!
DON'T SHOOT--WE GIVE UP! SPIDER-MAN IS WOUNDED; HE NEEDS A DOCTOR-- QUICKLY!
A BIT LATE TO SURRENDER, WIDOW. OUR ORDERS ARE TO SHOOT YOU ON SIGHT.
FEAR TWISTS WITHIN HER, A SOB CATCHING IN HER THROAT...
NO.
...HER MIND REFUSING TO ACCEPT THE GRIM REALITY AROUND HER.
AND THEN, SUDDENLY, HER BODY IS MOVING OF ITS OWN VOLITION, REACHING THE SHIELD AGENT IN A SINGLE STEP...
...SLAPPING THE BLASTER ASIDE WITH EYE-BLURRING SPEED...
...COUNTERING THE WOMAN'S DESPERATE ATTEMPTS TO DEFEND HER-SELF WITH DECEPTIVELY CASUAL EASE...
...BEFORE FINALLY DECKING HER.


OH, NO!
I'VE DONE IT AGAIN-- JUST LIKE BEFORE!
SHE TENSES TO SCREAM, SKIRTING ALONG THE BORDERLINE OF HYSTERIA...
WIDO-- I MEAN, NANCY--NOT NOW! YOU CAN'T GO TO PIECES NOW! THERE'S TOO MUCH AT STAKE!
BUT WHO-- WHAT AM I ?! IT WAS LIKE I WAS LOCKED INSIDE MY HEAD.
I WATCHED IT ALL HAPPEN, BUT I COULDN'T STOP MYSELF.
I UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FEEL. REALLY I DO.
BUT WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO DEAL WITH IT NOW.
THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING, WE MAY NEVER HAVE TIME.
RUN FOR IT, NANCY! GET DOWN TO THE STREET!
HEAD FOR A SUBWAY!
THWAPP!
IT'S ALMOST RUSH HOUR; THEY'LL NEVER FIND YOU IN THOSE CROWDS
I'LL TRY TO HOLD THEM AS LONG AS I CAN!
FUNNY-- I NEVER CONSIDERED THE WIDOW TO BE MY KIND OF PEOPLE.
BHAM!
BUT THIS NANCY RUSHMAN-- WHOEVER SHE REALLY IS-- SHE'S NICE.
TWO DOWN-- ONLY ABOUT A ZILLION TO GO!
LOOK OUT--!
UNNNGNH


HE'S DOWN--BUT THE WIDOW'S GONE!
WE CAN'T KILL HIM! WE NEED HIM TO TELL US WHERE SHE WENT!
TOOK IMPACT...HEAD ON-- KNOCKED... WIND OUTTA ME. BODY FEELS LIKE... PIECE OF LEAD... BARELY MOVE...
IN THE MEANTIME, WE CAN TEACH THIS ARROGANT ARACHNID A LESSON HE'LL NEVER FORGET!
HE TRIES TO DEFEND HIMSELF, BUT THAT ONLY MAKES THINGS WORSE.
WHILE, NEARBY...
THEY'RE KILLING HIM. THEY'LL KILL ME IF THEY CATCH ME.
I'VE GOT TO RUN.
RUN? DESERT A FRIEND?!
I'D SOONER DIE BESIDE HIM!
WITHIN HER MIND A RELAY CLOSES--AND NANCY RUSHMAN ONCE MORE FINDS HERSELF SHUNTED INTO THE BACKGROUND...
...TRAPPED WITHIN A HUMAN FIGHTING MACHINE.
SHE'S A BALLET OF DESTRUCTION AS SHE TEARS THROUGH THE ELITE STRIKE FORCE--THEY'RE THE BEST SHIELD HAS TO OFFER, YET AGAINST HER, THEY HAVEN'T A PRAYER!


WOW.
ALL OF A SUDDEN, RED, I'M AWFUL GLAD YOU'RE ON MY SIDE.
THIS IS GETTING TO BE A HABIT, Y'KNOW-- YOUR SAVING MY BUTT.
DON'T GET ME WRONG-- I'M GRATEFUL-- BUT I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU TO TAKE OFF.
I WANTED TO-- PART OF ME STILL WANTS TO-- BUT I'M TIRED OF RUNNING. FROM SHIELD--AND FROM MYSELF.
I NEED TO KNOW WHO I AM, SPIDER-MAN-- TEACHER OR SUPER-HEROINE.
AND YET-- I'M SCARED... OF DISCOVERING THAT I'M SOMEONE WHO LIVES DAY BY DAY WITH VIOLENCE AND DEATH.
EITHER WAY, I THINK I LOSE.
NANCY, I...
GET BEHIND ME-- FAST!
SPIDER-SENSE JUST KICKED INTO HIGH GEAR! WHAT THE HECK--?!
NICK FURY--?!?
IN THE FLESH, WALL-CRAWLER.
YOU AN' ME HAVE KNOWN EACH OTHER A LONG TIME, WIDOW.
I WISH IT DIDN'T HAVE TO END LIKE THIS.
BLHM
OH!
NANCY--!!


B-BLOOD...?!?
SHE'S NOT MOVING, NOT BREATHING--!
SHE... SHE'S...
SHE'S *DEAD*, FURY! YOU SHOT HER DOWN IN COLD BLOOD!
AND I WANT TO KNOW *WHY!*
I HAD MY REASONS, KID-- AN' THEY'RE NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.
JUST LIKE THAT, HUH?! NO EXPLANATION, NO REMORSE?!
JUST LIKE THAT.
THAT'S NOT GOOD ENOUGH, MISTER! I'M GONNA MAKE YOU PAY FOR WHAT YOU DID--
--OR DIE TRYING!
HAVE IT YOUR OWN WAY, KID.
BLAM
HUNH
I'M SORRY, HERO-- BUT YOU GIVE ME NO CHOICE.
VAL, YOU COME WITH ME.
THE REST OF YOU, CLEAN UP THIS MESS.
Y-YES, NICK.
NEXT
SLAUGHTER ON TENTH AVENUE!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SPIDER-MAN®
AND
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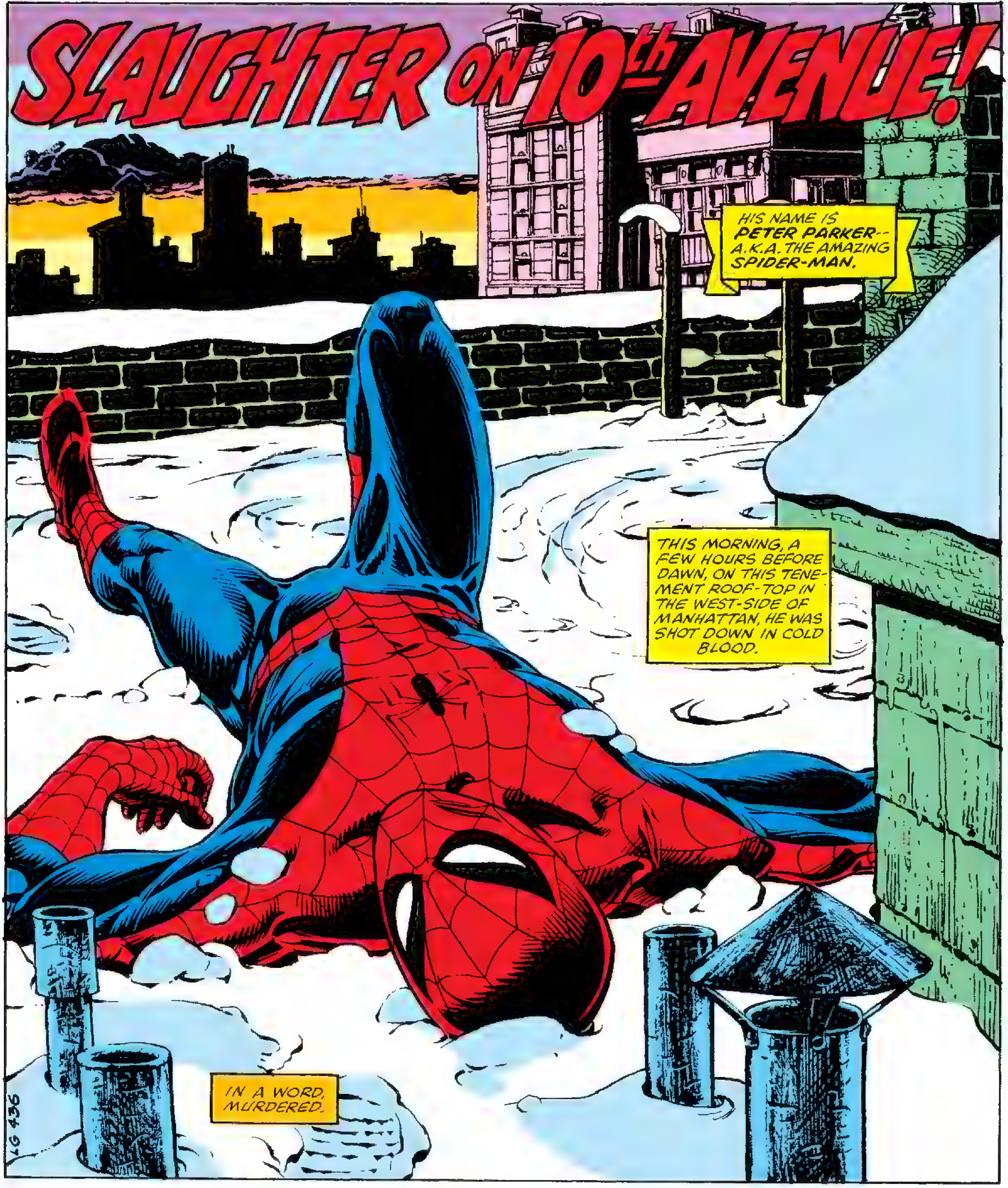
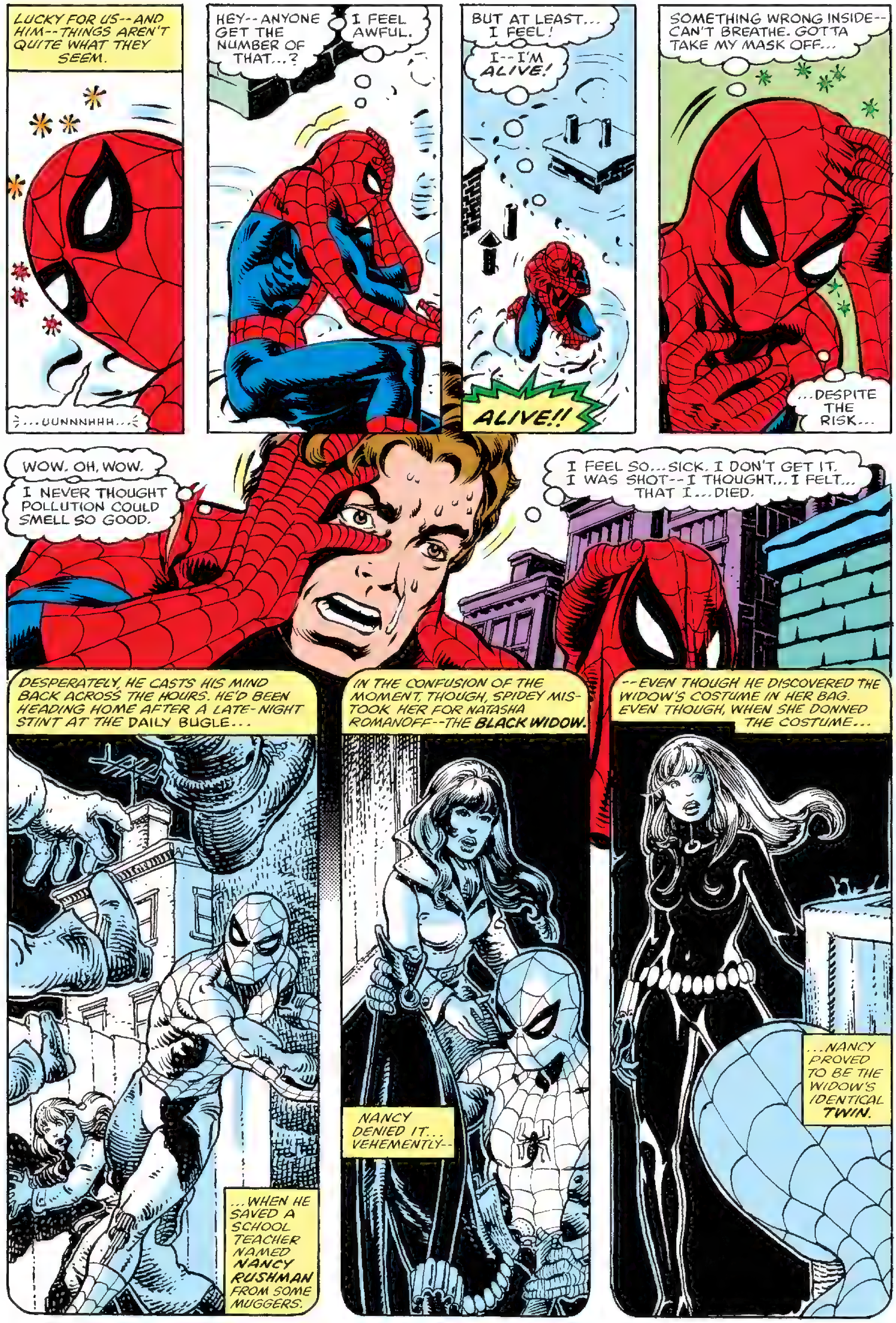
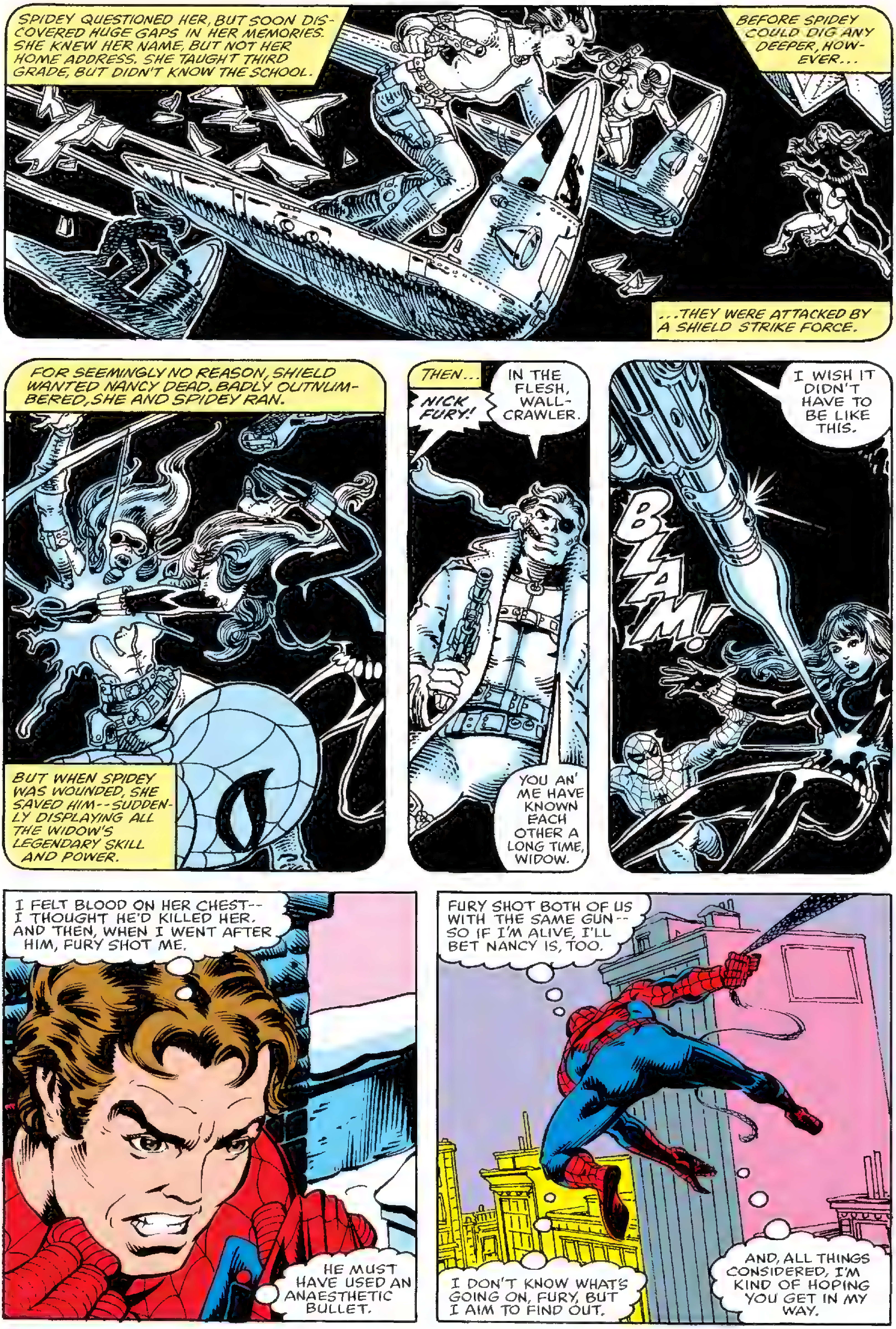
BUCKLER & LEIALOHA!
SLAUGHTER ON TENTH AVENUE!

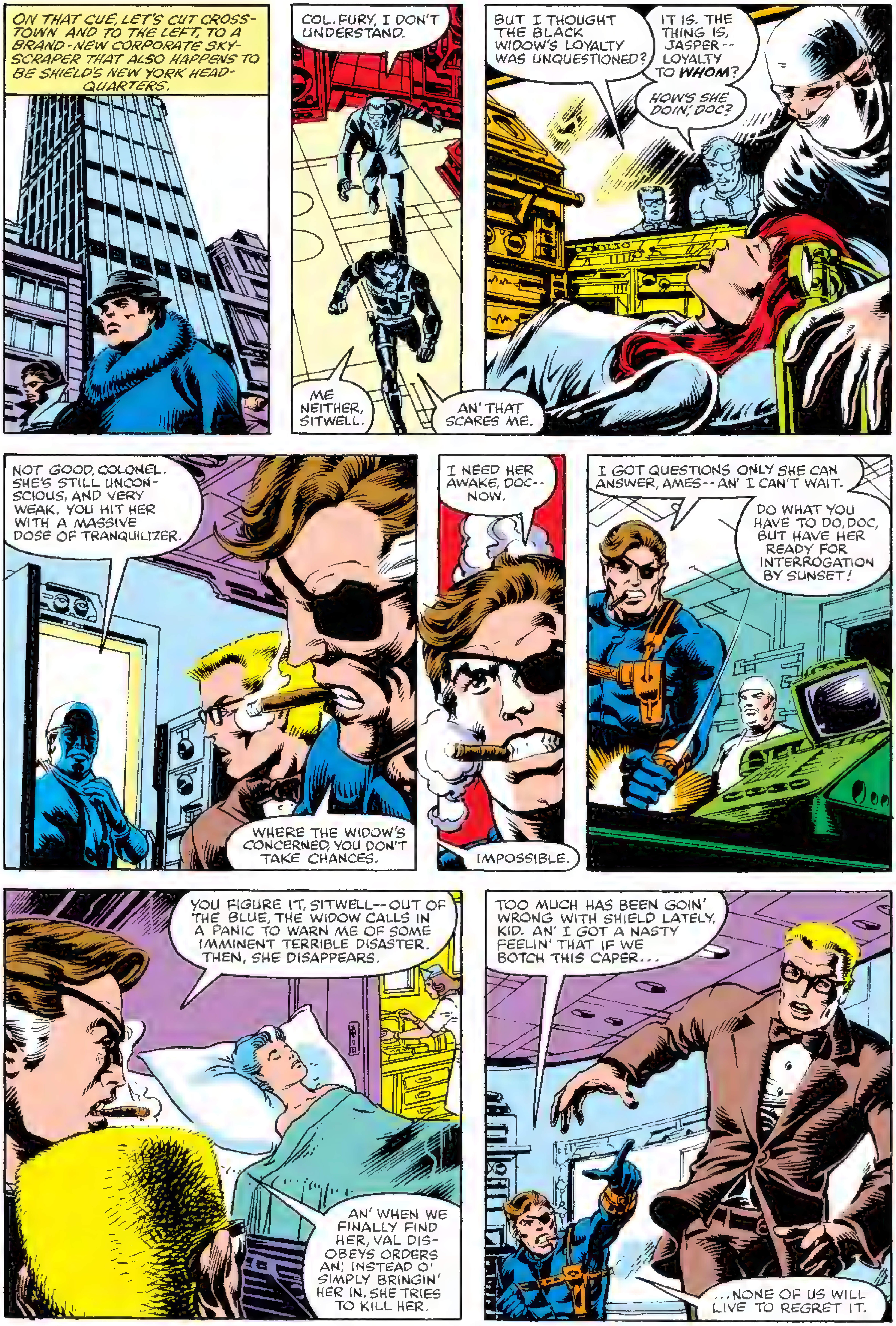
Stan Lee PRESENTS: SPIDER-MAN AND NICK FURY!

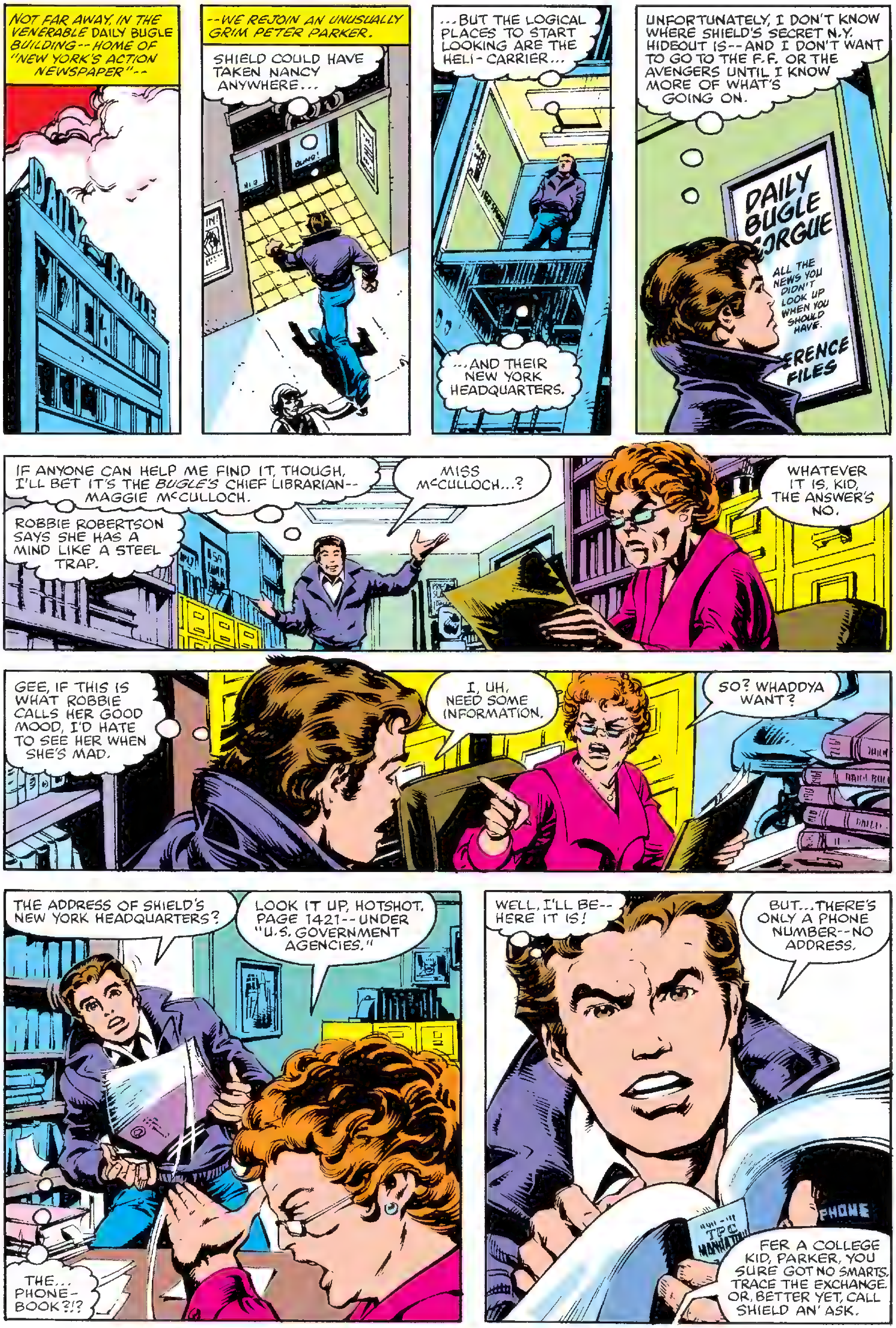
CHRIS CLAREMONT, AUTHOR * SAL BUSCEMA & STEVE LEIALOHA, ARTISTS * JOE ROSEN, LETTERER; BEN SEAN, COLORIST * ALLEN MILGROM, EDITOR * JIM SHOOTER, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

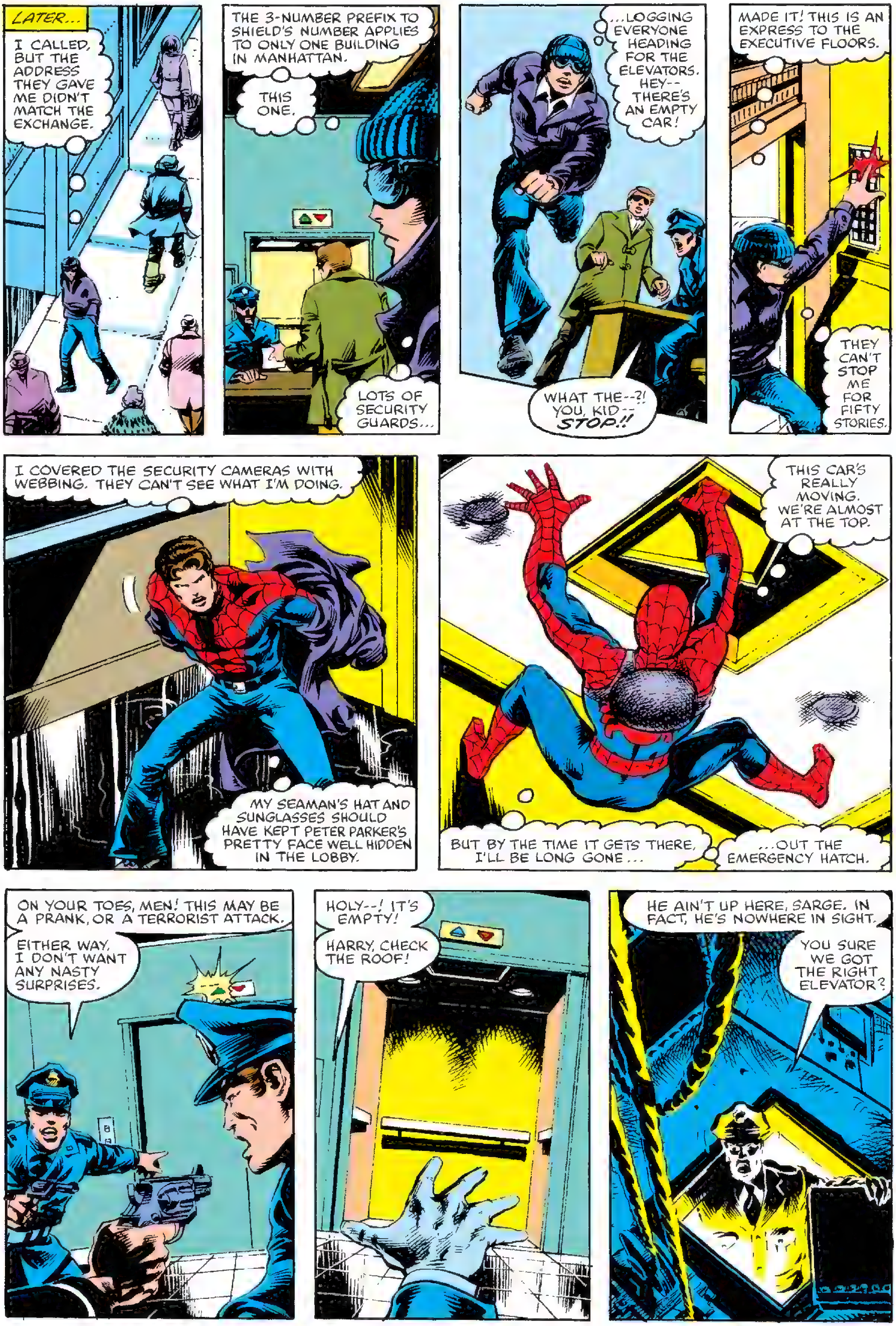

SLAUGHTER ON 10th AVENUE!
HIS NAME IS PETER PARKER-- A.K.A. THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN.
THIS MORNING, A FEW HOURS BEFORE DAWN, ON THIS TENEMENT ROOF-TOP IN THE WEST-SIDE OF MANHATTAN, HE WAS SHOT DOWN IN COLD BLOOD.
IN A WORD, MURDERED.
LG 436

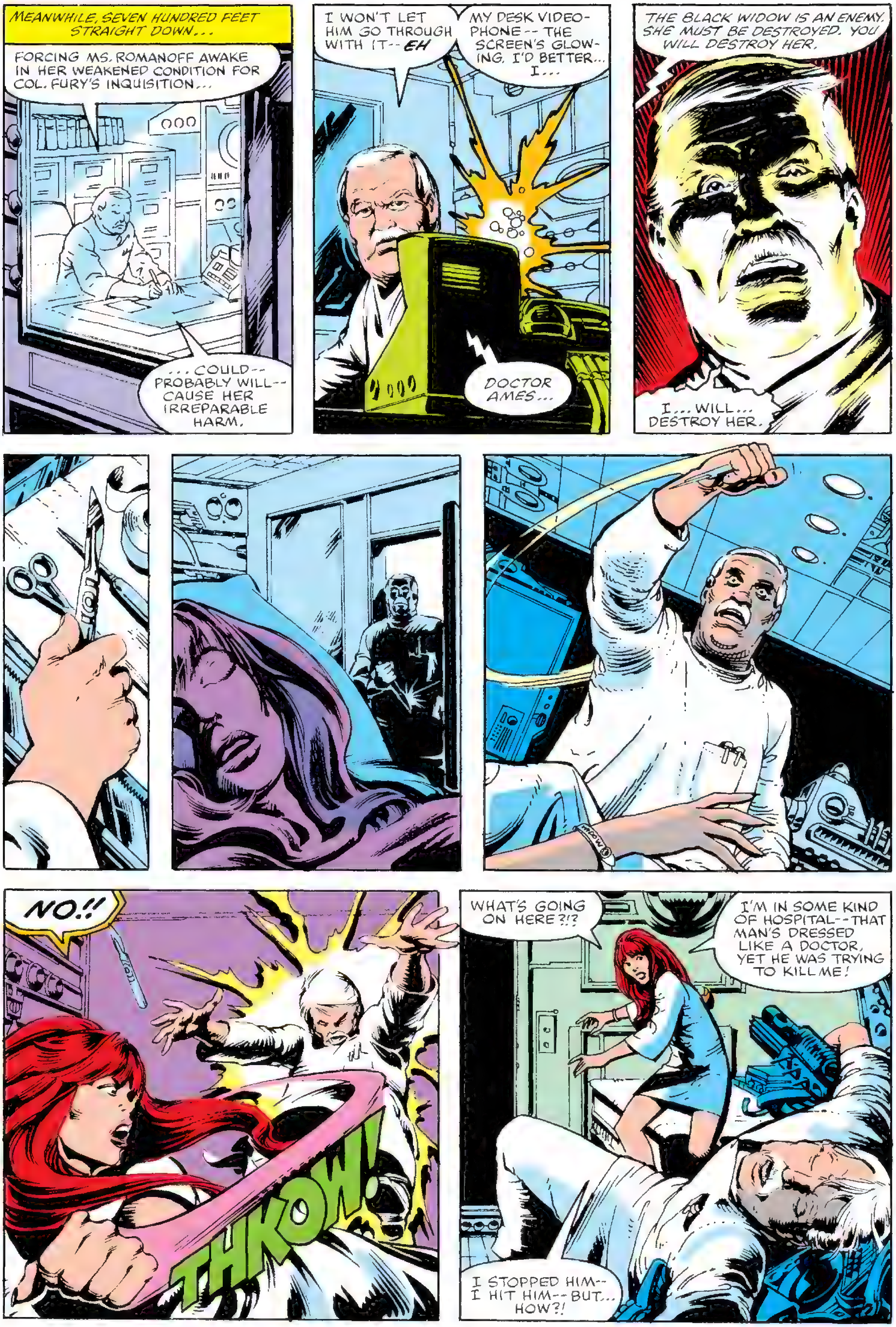

LUCKY FOR US--AND HIM--THINGS AREN'T QUITE WHAT THEY SEEM.
...UUNNNHHH...
HEY--ANYONE GET THE NUMBER OF THAT...?
I FEEL AWFUL.
BUT AT LEAST... I FEEL!
I--I'M ALIVE!
ALIVE!!
SOMETHING WRONG INSIDE--CAN'T BREATHE. GOTTA TAKE MY MASK OFF...
...DESPITE THE RISK...
WOW. OH, WOW.
I NEVER THOUGHT POLLUTION COULD SMELL SO GOOD.
I FEEL SO...SICK. I DON'T GET IT. I WAS SHOT--I THOUGHT... I FELT... THAT I...DIED.
DESPERATELY, HE CASTS HIS MIND BACK ACROSS THE HOURS. HE'D BEEN HEADING HOME AFTER A LATE-NIGHT STINT AT THE DAILY BUGLE...
...WHEN HE SAVED A SCHOOL TEACHER NAMED NANCY RUSHMAN FROM SOME MUGGERS.
IN THE CONFUSION OF THE MOMENT, THOUGH, SPIDEY MISTOOK HER FOR NATASHA ROMANOFF--THE BLACK WIDOW.
NANCY DENIED IT... VEHEMENTLY--
--EVEN THOUGH HE DISCOVERED THE WIDOW'S COSTUME IN HER BAG. EVEN THOUGH, WHEN SHE DONNED THE COSTUME...
...NANCY PROVED TO BE THE WIDOW'S IDENTICAL TWIN.

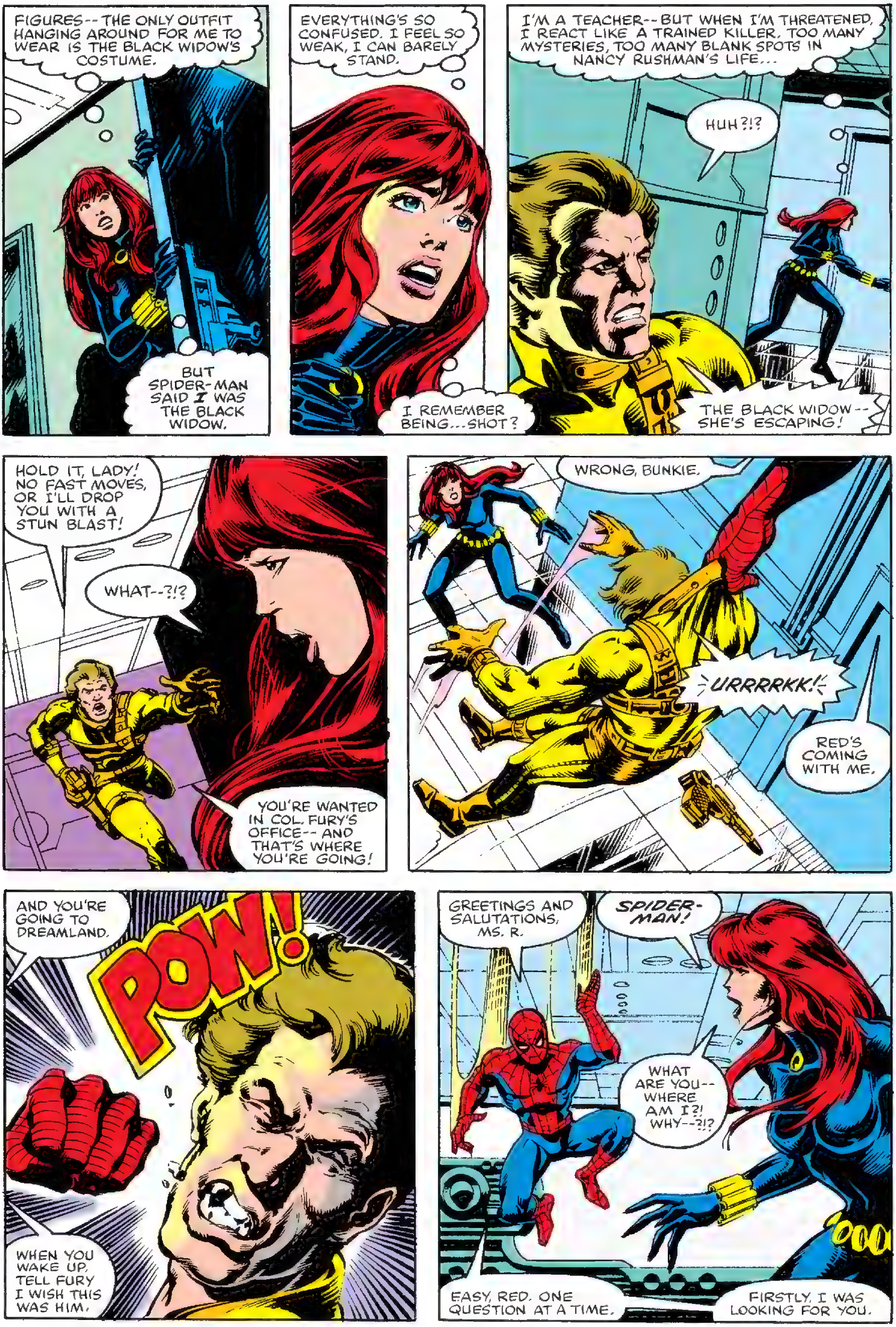

SPIDEY QUESTIONED HER, BUT SOON DISCOVERED HUGE GAPS IN HER MEMORIES. SHE KNEW HER NAME, BUT NOT HER HOME ADDRESS. SHE TAUGHT THIRD GRADE, BUT DIDN'T KNOW THE SCHOOL.
BEFORE SPIDEY COULD DIG ANY DEEPER, HOWEVER...
...THEY WERE ATTACKED BY A SHIELD STRIKE FORCE.
FOR SEEMINGLY NO REASON, SHIELD WANTED NANCY DEAD. BADLY OUTNUMBERED, SHE AND SPIDEY RAN.
BUT WHEN SPIDEY WAS WOUNDED, SHE SAVED HIM--SUDDENLY DISPLAYING ALL THE WIDOW'S LEGENDARY SKILL AND POWER.
THEN...
NICK FURY!
IN THE FLESH, WALL-CRAWLER.
YOU AN' ME HAVE KNOWN EACH OTHER A LONG TIME, WIDOW.
I WISH IT DIDN'T HAVE TO BE LIKE THIS.
BLAM!
I FELT BLOOD ON HER CHEST-- I THOUGHT HE'D KILLED HER. AND THEN, WHEN I WENT AFTER HIM, FURY SHOT ME.
HE MUST HAVE USED AN ANAESTHETIC BULLET.
FURY SHOT BOTH OF US WITH THE SAME GUN-- SO IF I'M ALIVE, I'LL BET NANCY IS, TOO.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON, FURY, BUT I AIM TO FIND OUT.
AND, ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, I'M KIND OF HOPING YOU GET IN MY WAY.

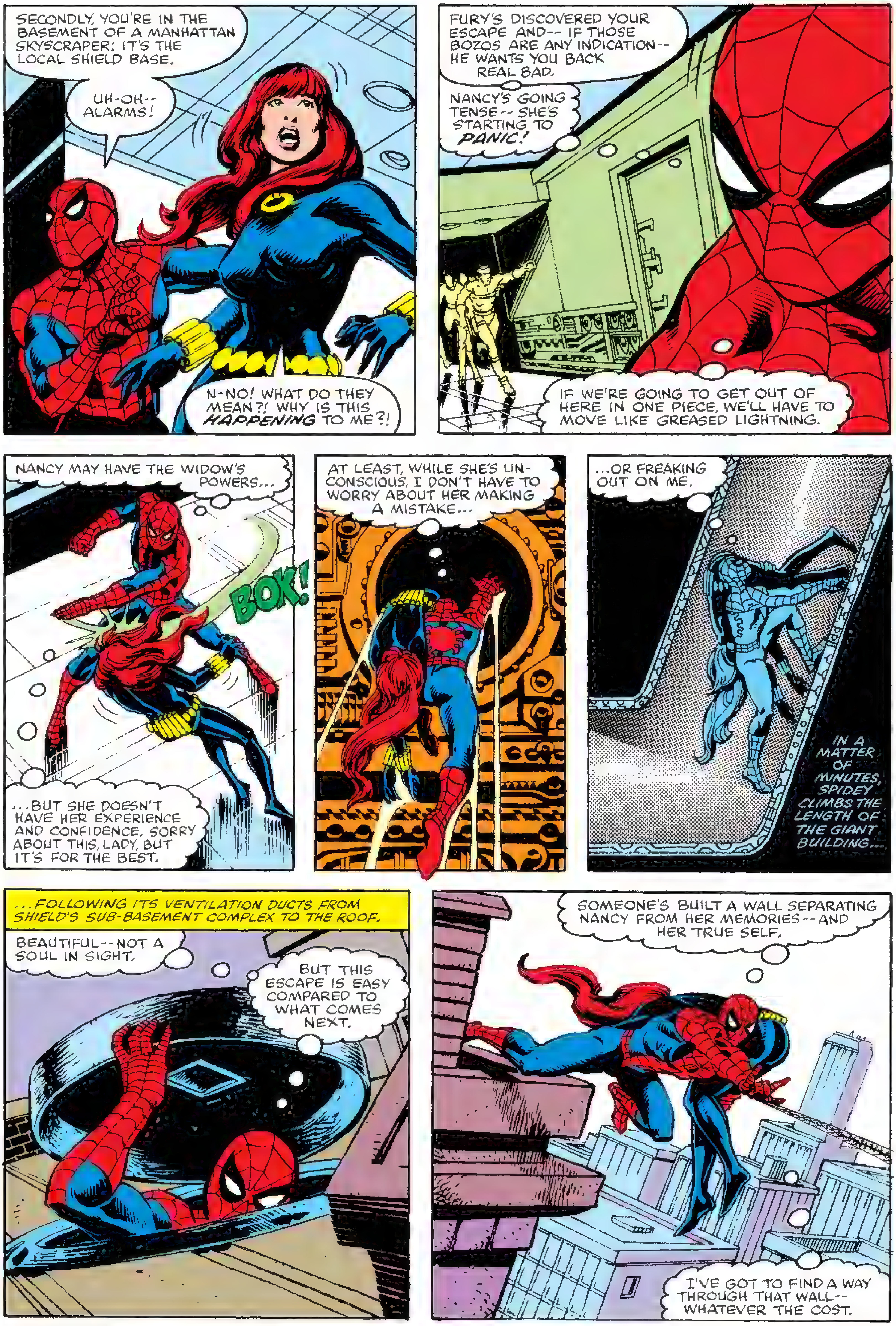

ON THAT CUE, LET'S CUT CROSS-TOWN AND TO THE LEFT, TO A BRAND-NEW CORPORATE SKY-SCRAPER THAT ALSO HAPPENS TO BE SHIELD'S NEW YORK HEAD-QUARTERS.
COL. FURY, I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
ME NEITHER, SITWELL.
AN' THAT SCARES ME.
BUT I THOUGHT THE BLACK WIDOW'S LOYALTY WAS UNQUESTIONED?
IT IS. THE THING IS, JASPER-- LOYALTY TO WHOM?
HOW'S SHE DOIN', DOC?
NOT GOOD, COLONEL. SHE'S STILL UNCON-SCIOUS, AND VERY WEAK. YOU HIT HER WITH A MASSIVE DOSE OF TRANQUILIZER.
WHERE THE WIDOW'S CONCERNED, YOU DON'T TAKE CHANCES.
I NEED HER AWAKE, DOC-- NOW.
IMPOSSIBLE.
I GOT QUESTIONS ONLY SHE CAN ANSWER, AMES-- AN' I CAN'T WAIT.
DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO, DOC, BUT HAVE HER READY FOR INTERROGATION BY SUNSET!
YOU FIGURE IT, SITWELL--OUT OF THE BLUE, THE WIDOW CALLS IN A PANIC TO WARN ME OF SOME IMMINENT TERRIBLE DISASTER. THEN, SHE DISAPPEARS.
AN' WHEN WE FINALLY FIND HER, VAL DIS-OBEYS ORDERS AN', INSTEAD O' SIMPLY BRINGIN' HER IN, SHE TRIES TO KILL HER.
TOO MUCH HAS BEEN GOIN' WRONG WITH SHIELD LATELY, KID. AN' I GOT A NASTY FEELIN' THAT IF WE BOTCH THIS CAPER...
...NONE OF US WILL LIVE TO REGRET IT.

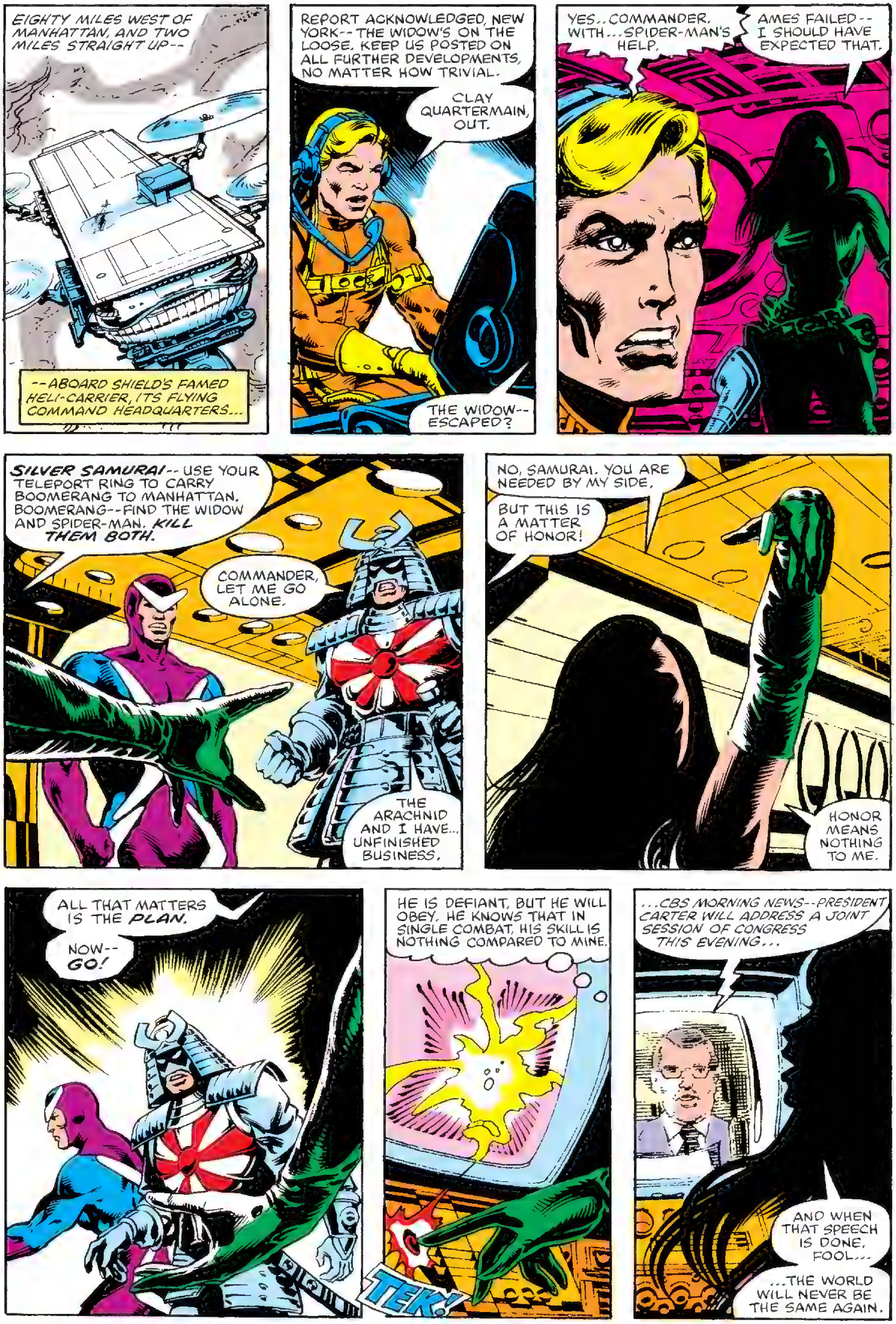

NOT FAR AWAY, IN THE VENERABLE DAILY BUGLE BUILDING--HOME OF "NEW YORK'S ACTION NEWSPAPER"--
DAILY BUGLE
--WE REJOIN AN UNUSUALLY GRIM PETER PARKER.
SHIELD COULD HAVE TAKEN NANCY ANYWHERE...
...BUT THE LOGICAL PLACES TO START LOOKING ARE THE HELI-CARRIER...
...AND THEIR NEW YORK HEADQUARTERS.
UNFORTUNATELY, I DON'T KNOW WHERE SHIELD'S SECRET N.Y. HIDEOUT IS--AND I DON'T WANT TO GO TO THE F.F. OR THE AVENGERS UNTIL I KNOW MORE OF WHAT'S GOING ON.
DAILY BUGLE ORGUE
ALL THE NEWS YOU DIDN'T LOOK UP WHEN YOU SHOULD HAVE.
ERENCE FILES
IF ANYONE CAN HELP ME FIND IT, THOUGH, I'LL BET IT'S THE *BUGLE'S* CHIEF LIBRARIAN-- MAGGIE McCULLOCH.
ROBBIE ROBERTSON SAYS SHE HAS A MIND LIKE A STEEL TRAP.
MISS McCULLOCH...?
WHATEVER IT IS, KID, THE ANSWER'S NO.
GEE, IF THIS IS WHAT ROBBIE CALLS HER GOOD MOOD, I'D HATE TO SEE HER WHEN SHE'S MAD.
I, UH, NEED SOME INFORMATION.
SO? WHADDYA WANT?
THE ADDRESS OF SHIELD'S NEW YORK HEADQUARTERS?
LOOK IT UP, HOTSHOT. PAGE 1421--UNDER "U.S. GOVERNMENT AGENCIES."
THE... PHONE-BOOK?!?
WELL, I'LL BE-- HERE IT IS!
BUT...THERE'S ONLY A PHONE NUMBER--NO ADDRESS.
PHONE
TPC MANHATTAN
FER A COLLEGE KID, PARKER, YOU SURE GOT NO SMARTS. TRACE THE EXCHANGE. OR, BETTER YET, CALL SHIELD AN' ASK.

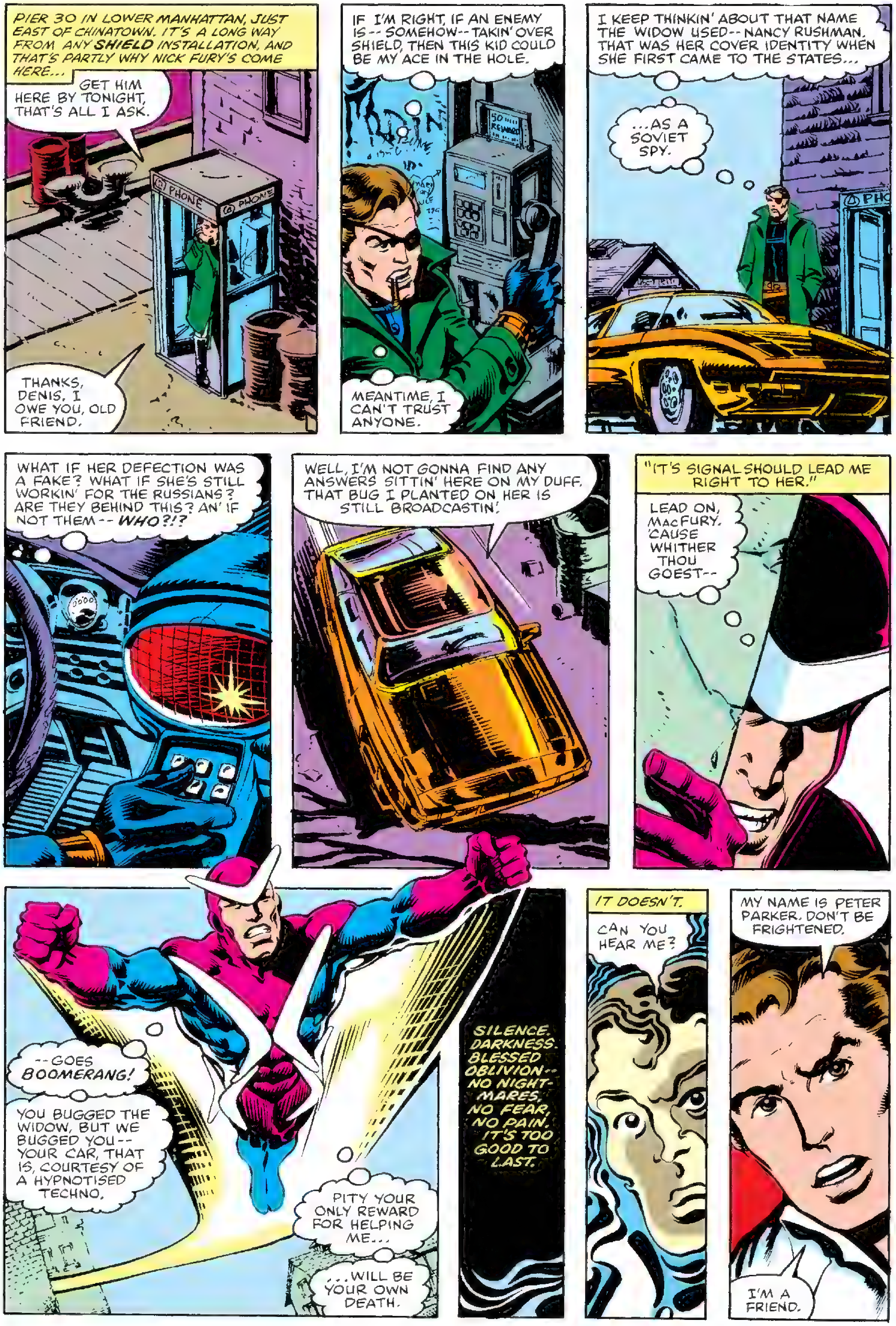

LATER...
I CALLED, BUT THE ADDRESS THEY GAVE ME DIDN'T MATCH THE EXCHANGE.
THE 3-NUMBER PREFIX TO SHIELD'S NUMBER APPLIES TO ONLY ONE BUILDING IN MANHATTAN.
THIS ONE.
LOTS OF SECURITY GUARDS...
...LOGGING EVERYONE HEADING FOR THE ELEVATORS. HEY-- THERE'S AN EMPTY CAR!
WHAT THE--?! YOU, KID-- STOP!!
MADE IT! THIS IS AN EXPRESS TO THE EXECUTIVE FLOORS.
THEY CAN'T STOP ME FOR FIFTY STORIES.
I COVERED THE SECURITY CAMERAS WITH WEBBING. THEY CAN'T SEE WHAT I'M DOING.
MY SEAMAN'S HAT AND SUNGLASSES SHOULD HAVE KEPT PETER PARKER'S PRETTY FACE WELL HIDDEN IN THE LOBBY.
THIS CAR'S REALLY MOVING. WE'RE ALMOST AT THE TOP.
BUT BY THE TIME IT GETS THERE, I'LL BE LONG GONE...
...OUT THE EMERGENCY HATCH.
ON YOUR TOES, MEN! THIS MAY BE A PRANK, OR A TERRORIST ATTACK.
EITHER WAY, I DON'T WANT ANY NASTY SURPRISES.
HOLY--! IT'S EMPTY!
HARRY, CHECK THE ROOF!
HE AIN'T UP HERE, SARGE. IN FACT, HE'S NOWHERE IN SIGHT.
YOU SURE WE GOT THE RIGHT ELEVATOR?

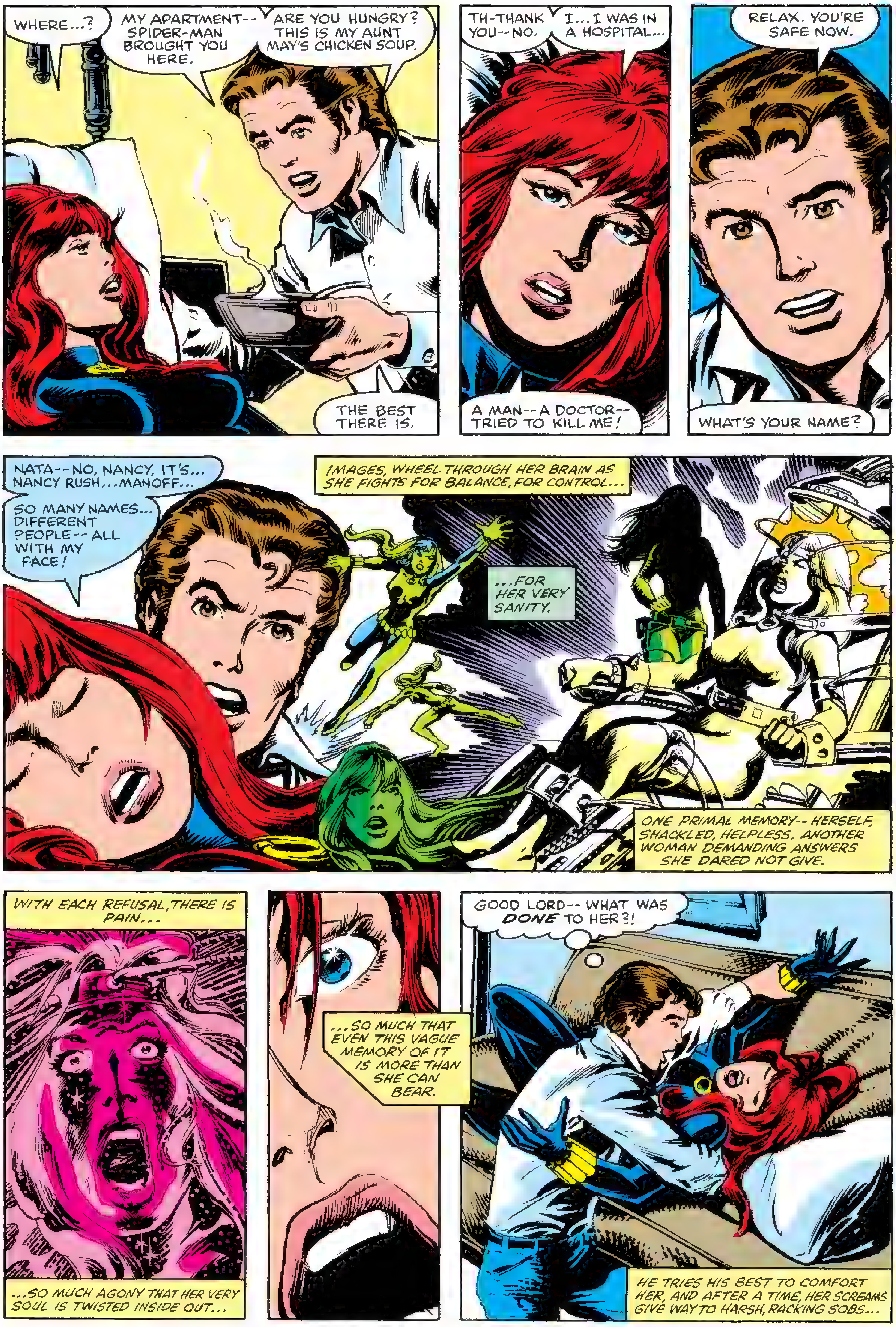

MEANWHILE, SEVEN HUNDRED FEET STRAIGHT DOWN...
FORCING MS. ROMANOFF AWAKE IN HER WEAKENED CONDITION FOR COL. FURY'S INQUISITION...
...COULD--PROBABLY WILL--CAUSE HER IRREPARABLE HARM.
I WON'T LET HIM GO THROUGH WITH IT--EH
MY DESK VIDEO-PHONE--THE SCREEN'S GLOWING. I'D BETTER... I...
DOCTOR AMES...
THE BLACK WIDOW IS AN ENEMY. SHE MUST BE DESTROYED. YOU WILL DESTROY HER.
I...WILL... DESTROY HER.
NO.!!
THKOW!
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?!?
I'M IN SOME KIND OF HOSPITAL--THAT MAN'S DRESSED LIKE A DOCTOR, YET HE WAS TRYING TO KILL ME!
I STOPPED HIM--I HIT HIM--BUT... HOW?!

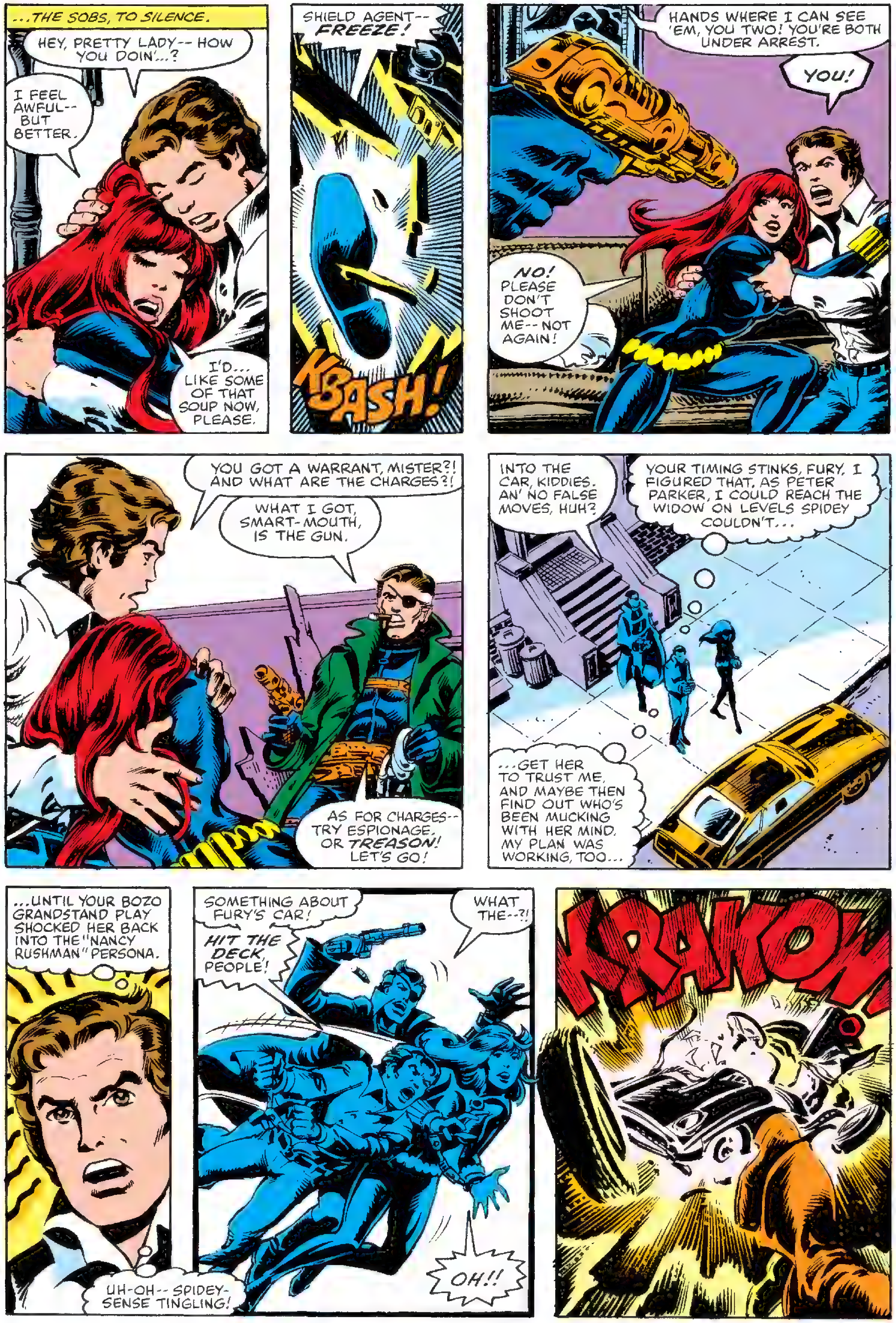

FIGURES-- THE ONLY OUTFIT HANGING AROUND FOR ME TO WEAR IS THE BLACK WIDOW'S COSTUME.
BUT SPIDER-MAN SAID *I* WAS THE BLACK WIDOW.
EVERYTHING'S SO CONFUSED. I FEEL SO WEAK, I CAN BARELY STAND.
I REMEMBER BEING... SHOT?
I'M A TEACHER-- BUT WHEN I'M THREATENED, I REACT LIKE A TRAINED KILLER. TOO MANY MYSTERIES, TOO MANY BLANK SPOTS IN NANCY RUSHMAN'S LIFE...
HUH?!?
THE BLACK WIDOW-- SHE'S ESCAPING!
HOLD IT, LADY! NO FAST MOVES, OR I'LL DROP YOU WITH A STUN BLAST!
WHAT--?!?
YOU'RE WANTED IN COL. FURY'S OFFICE-- AND THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE GOING!
WRONG, BUNKIE.
URRRRKK!
RED'S COMING WITH ME.
AND YOU'RE GOING TO DREAMLAND.
POW!
WHEN YOU WAKE UP, TELL FURY I WISH THIS WAS HIM.
GREETINGS AND SALUTATIONS, MS. R.
SPIDER-MAN!
WHAT ARE YOU-- WHERE AM I?! WHY--?!?
EASY, RED. ONE QUESTION AT A TIME.
FIRSTLY, I WAS LOOKING FOR YOU.

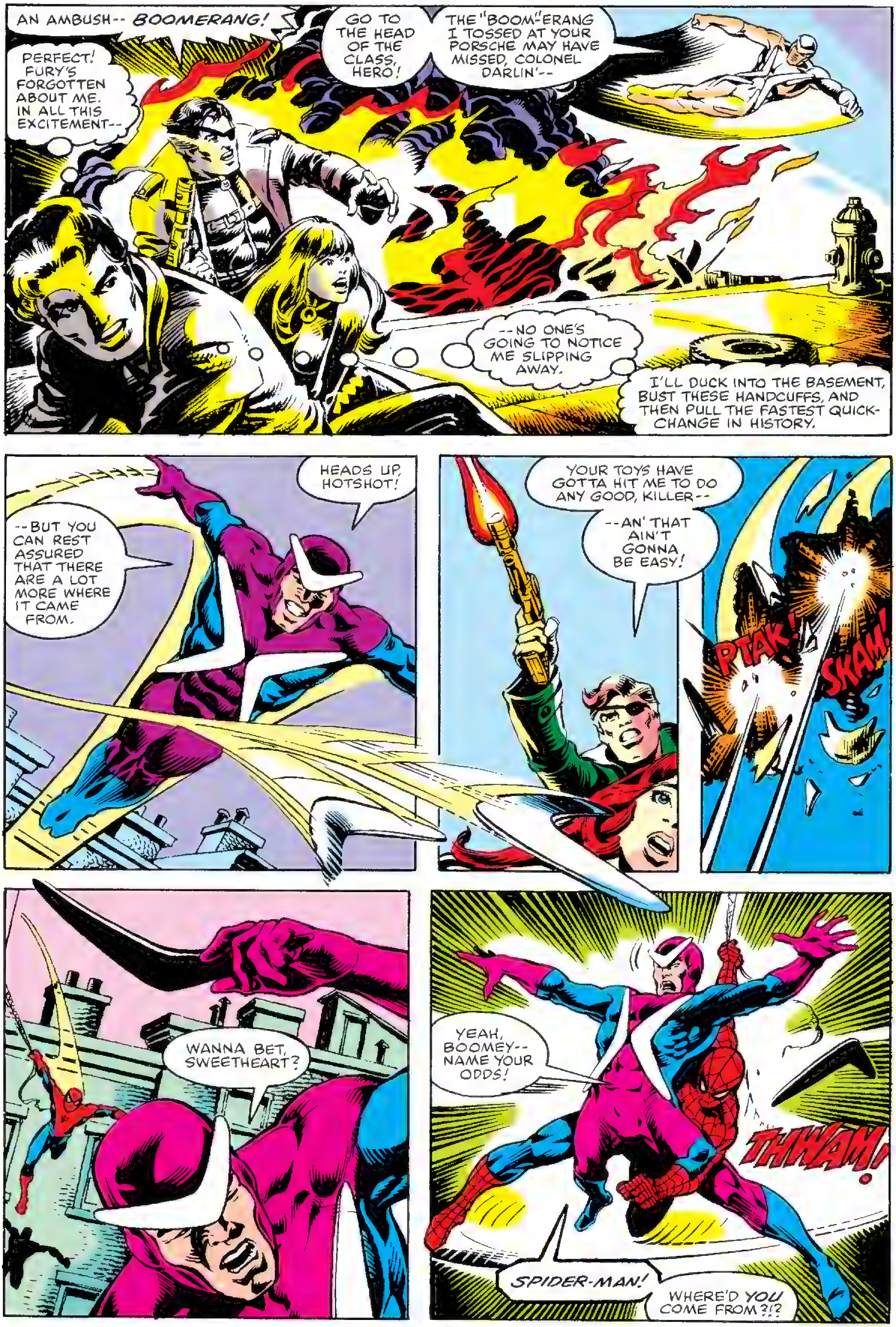

SECONDLY, YOU'RE IN THE BASEMENT OF A MANHATTAN SKYSCRAPER; IT'S THE LOCAL SHIELD BASE.
UH-OH-- ALARMS!
N-NO! WHAT DO THEY MEAN?! WHY IS THIS *HAPPENING* TO ME?!
FURY'S DISCOVERED YOUR ESCAPE AND-- IF THOSE BOZOS ARE ANY INDICATION-- HE WANTS YOU BACK REAL BAD.
NANCY'S GOING TENSE-- SHE'S STARTING TO *PANIC!*
IF WE'RE GOING TO GET OUT OF HERE IN ONE PIECE, WE'LL HAVE TO MOVE LIKE GREASED LIGHTNING.
NANCY MAY HAVE THE WIDOW'S POWERS...
BOK!
...BUT SHE DOESN'T HAVE HER EXPERIENCE AND CONFIDENCE. SORRY ABOUT THIS, LADY, BUT IT'S FOR THE BEST.
AT LEAST, WHILE SHE'S UNCONSCIOUS, I DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT HER MAKING A MISTAKE...
...OR FREAKING OUT ON ME.
IN A MATTER OF MINUTES, SPIDEY CLIMBS THE LENGTH OF THE GIANT BUILDING...
...FOLLOWING ITS VENTILATION DUCTS FROM SHIELD'S SUB-BASEMENT COMPLEX TO THE ROOF.
BEAUTIFUL--NOT A SOUL IN SIGHT.
BUT THIS ESCAPE IS EASY COMPARED TO WHAT COMES NEXT.
SOMEONE'S BUILT A WALL SEPARATING NANCY FROM HER MEMORIES--AND HER TRUE SELF.
I'VE GOT TO FIND A WAY THROUGH THAT WALL-- WHATEVER THE COST.

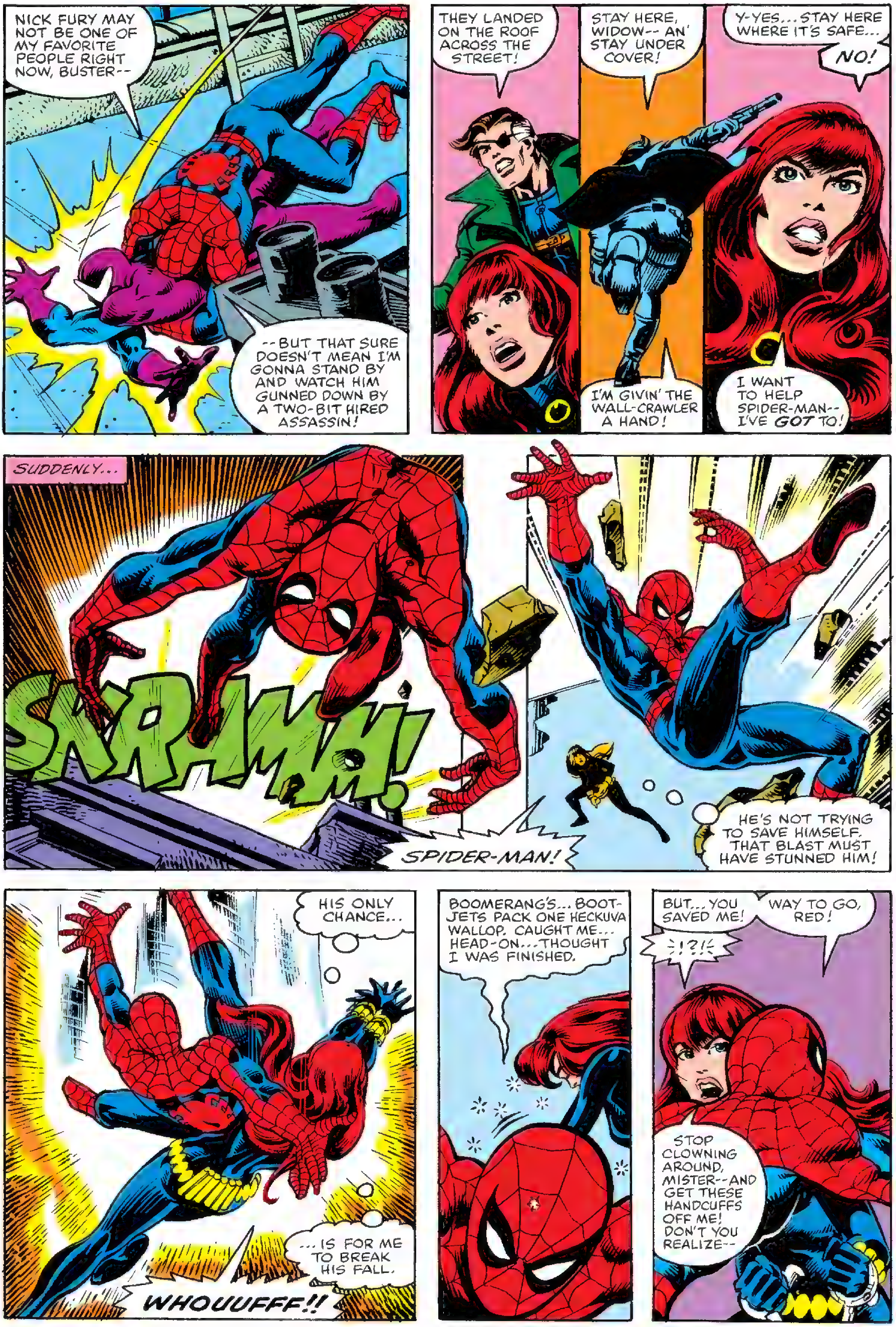

EIGHTY MILES WEST OF MANHATTAN, AND TWO MILES STRAIGHT UP--
--ABOARD SHIELD'S FAMED HELI-CARRIER, ITS FLYING COMMAND HEADQUARTERS...
REPORT ACKNOWLEDGED, NEW YORK--THE WIDOW'S ON THE LOOSE. KEEP US POSTED ON ALL FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS, NO MATTER HOW TRIVIAL.
CLAY QUARTERMAIN, OUT.
THE WIDOW--ESCAPED?
YES...COMMANDER. WITH...SPIDER-MAN'S HELP.
AMES FAILED--I SHOULD HAVE EXPECTED THAT.
SILVER SAMURAI--USE YOUR TELEPORT RING TO CARRY BOOMERANG TO MANHATTAN. BOOMERANG--FIND THE WIDOW AND SPIDER-MAN. KILL THEM BOTH.
COMMANDER, LET ME GO ALONE.
THE ARACHNID AND I HAVE... UNFINISHED BUSINESS.
NO, SAMURAI. YOU ARE NEEDED BY MY SIDE.
BUT THIS IS A MATTER OF HONOR!
HONOR MEANS NOTHING TO ME.
ALL THAT MATTERS IS THE PLAN.
NOW--GO!
HE IS DEFIANT, BUT HE WILL OBEY. HE KNOWS THAT IN SINGLE COMBAT, HIS SKILL IS NOTHING COMPARED TO MINE.
TEK!
...CBS MORNING NEWS--PRESIDENT CARTER WILL ADDRESS A JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS THIS EVENING...
AND WHEN THAT SPEECH IS DONE, FOOL...
...THE WORLD WILL NEVER BE THE SAME AGAIN.

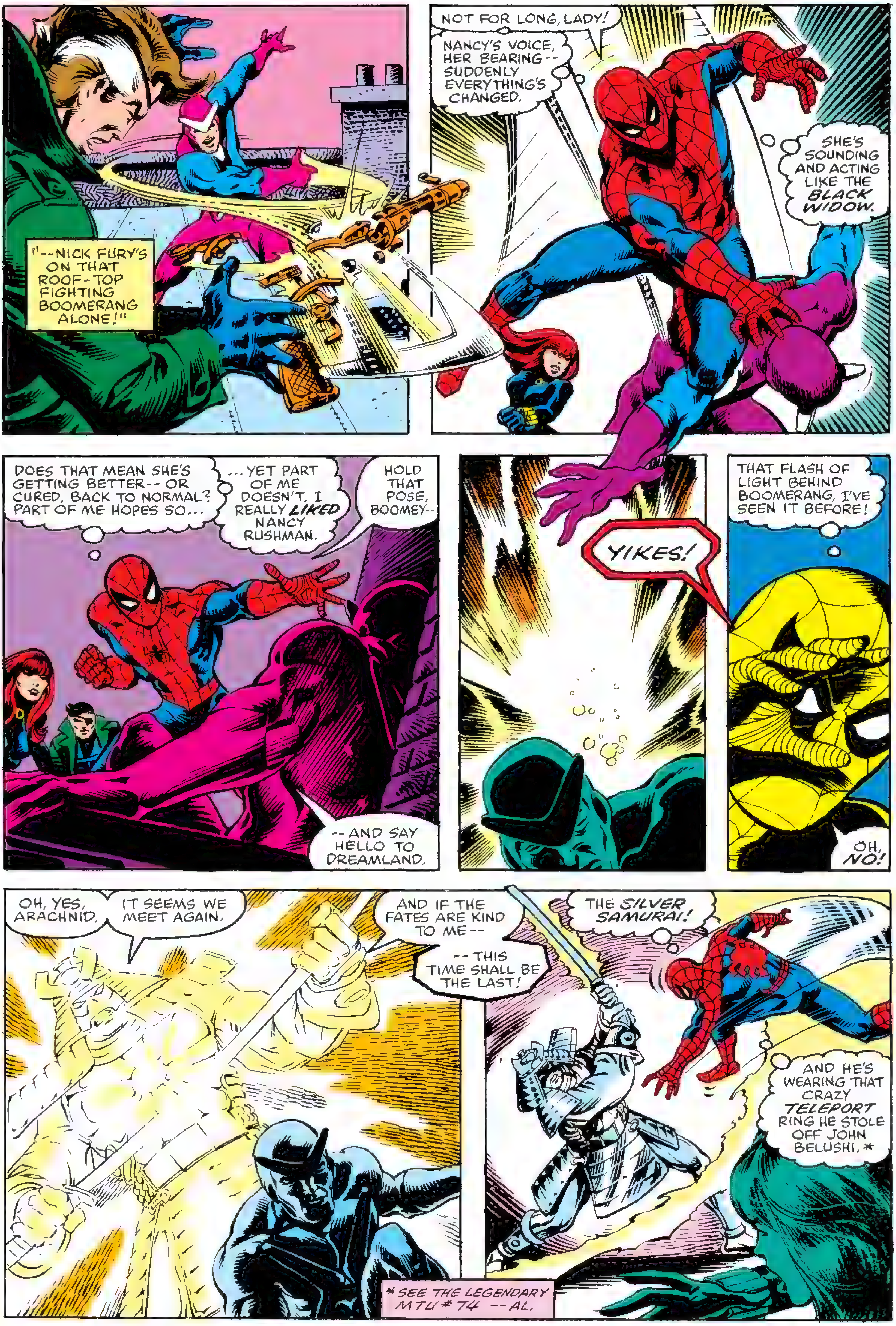

PIER 30 IN LOWER MANHATTAN, JUST EAST OF CHINATOWN. IT'S A LONG WAY FROM ANY SHIELD INSTALLATION, AND THAT'S PARTLY WHY NICK FURY'S COME HERE...
GET HIM HERE BY TONIGHT, THAT'S ALL I ASK.
PHONE
PHONE
THANKS, DENIS. I OWE YOU, OLD FRIEND.
IF I'M RIGHT, IF AN ENEMY IS -- SOMEHOW -- TAKIN' OVER SHIELD, THEN THIS KID COULD BE MY ACE IN THE HOLE.
MEANTIME, I CAN'T TRUST ANYONE.
I KEEP THINKIN' ABOUT THAT NAME THE WIDOW USED -- NANCY RUSHMAN. THAT WAS HER COVER IDENTITY WHEN SHE FIRST CAME TO THE STATES...
...AS A SOVIET SPY.
WHAT IF HER DEFECTION WAS A FAKE? WHAT IF SHE'S STILL WORKIN' FOR THE RUSSIANS? ARE THEY BEHIND THIS? AN' IF NOT THEM -- WHO?!?
WELL, I'M NOT GONNA FIND ANY ANSWERS SITTIN' HERE ON MY DUFF. THAT BUG I PLANTED ON HER IS STILL BROADCASTIN'.
"IT'S SIGNAL SHOULD LEAD ME RIGHT TO HER."
LEAD ON, MacFURY, 'CAUSE WHITHER THOU GOEST--
--GOES BOOMERANG!
YOU BUGGED THE WIDOW, BUT WE BUGGED YOU -- YOUR CAR, THAT IS, COURTESY OF A HYPNOTISED TECHNO.
PITY YOUR ONLY REWARD FOR HELPING ME...
...WILL BE YOUR OWN DEATH.
SILENCE. DARKNESS. BLESSED OBLIVION -- NO NIGHTMARES, NO FEAR, NO PAIN. IT'S TOO GOOD TO LAST.
IT DOESN'T.
CAN YOU HEAR ME?
MY NAME IS PETER PARKER. DON'T BE FRIGHTENED.
I'M A FRIEND.

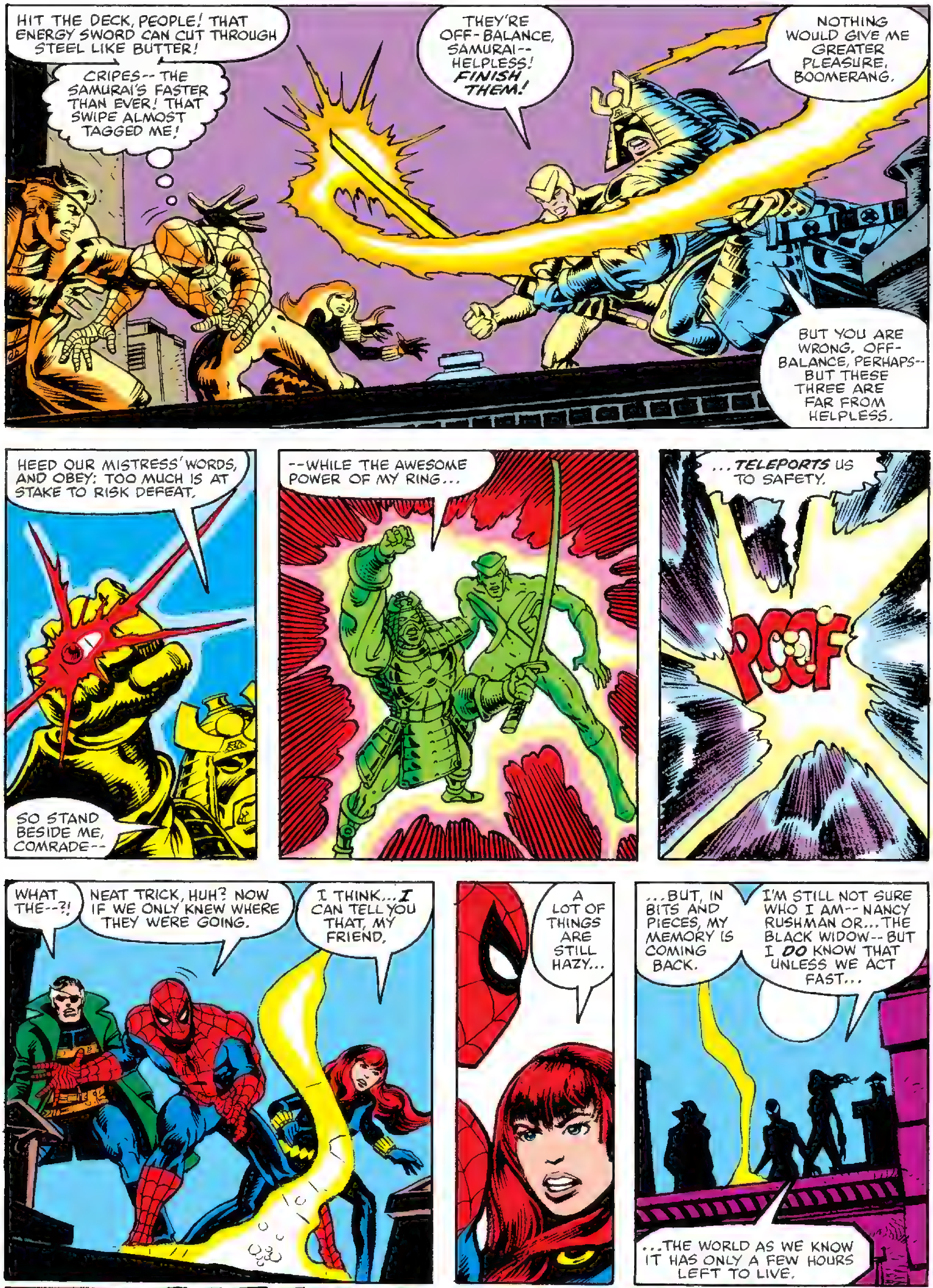

WHERE...?
MY APARTMENT-- SPIDER-MAN BROUGHT YOU HERE.
ARE YOU HUNGRY? THIS IS MY AUNT MAY'S CHICKEN SOUP.
THE BEST THERE IS.
TH-THANK YOU--NO.
I...I WAS IN A HOSPITAL...
A MAN--A DOCTOR-- TRIED TO KILL ME!
RELAX. YOU'RE SAFE NOW.
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
NATA--NO, NANCY, IT'S... NANCY RUSH...MANOFF...
SO MANY NAMES... DIFFERENT PEOPLE-- ALL WITH MY FACE!
IMAGES, WHEEL THROUGH HER BRAIN AS SHE FIGHTS FOR BALANCE, FOR CONTROL...
...FOR HER VERY SANITY.
ONE PRIMAL MEMORY-- HERSELF, SHACKLED, HELPLESS. ANOTHER WOMAN DEMANDING ANSWERS SHE DARED NOT GIVE.
WITH EACH REFUSAL, THERE IS PAIN...
...SO MUCH AGONY THAT HER VERY SOUL IS TWISTED INSIDE OUT...
...SO MUCH THAT EVEN THIS VAGUE MEMORY OF IT IS MORE THAN SHE CAN BEAR.
GOOD LORD-- WHAT WAS DONE TO HER?!
HE TRIES HIS BEST TO COMFORT HER, AND AFTER A TIME, HER SCREAMS GIVE WAY TO HARSH, RACKING SOBS...


...THE SOBS, TO SILENCE.
HEY, PRETTY LADY-- HOW YOU DOIN'...?
I FEEL AWFUL-- BUT BETTER.
I'D... LIKE SOME OF THAT SOUP NOW, PLEASE.
SHIELD AGENT-- FREEZE!
KBASH!
HANDS WHERE I CAN SEE 'EM, YOU TWO! YOU'RE BOTH UNDER ARREST.
YOU!
NO! PLEASE DON'T SHOOT ME-- NOT AGAIN!
YOU GOT A WARRANT, MISTER?! AND WHAT ARE THE CHARGES?!
WHAT I GOT, SMART-MOUTH, IS THE GUN.
AS FOR CHARGES-- TRY ESPIONAGE, OR TREASON! LET'S GO!
INTO THE CAR, KIDDIES. AN' NO FALSE MOVES, HUH?
YOUR TIMING STINKS, FURY. I FIGURED THAT, AS PETER PARKER, I COULD REACH THE WIDOW ON LEVELS SPIDEY COULDN'T...
...GET HER TO TRUST ME, AND MAYBE THEN FIND OUT WHO'S BEEN MUCKING WITH HER MIND. MY PLAN WAS WORKING, TOO...
...UNTIL YOUR BOZO GRANDSTAND PLAY SHOCKED HER BACK INTO THE "NANCY RUSHMAN" PERSONA.
UH-OH-- SPIDEY-SENSE TINGLING!
SOMETHING ABOUT FURY'S CAR!
HIT THE DECK, PEOPLE!
WHAT THE--?!
OH!!
KRAKOOM

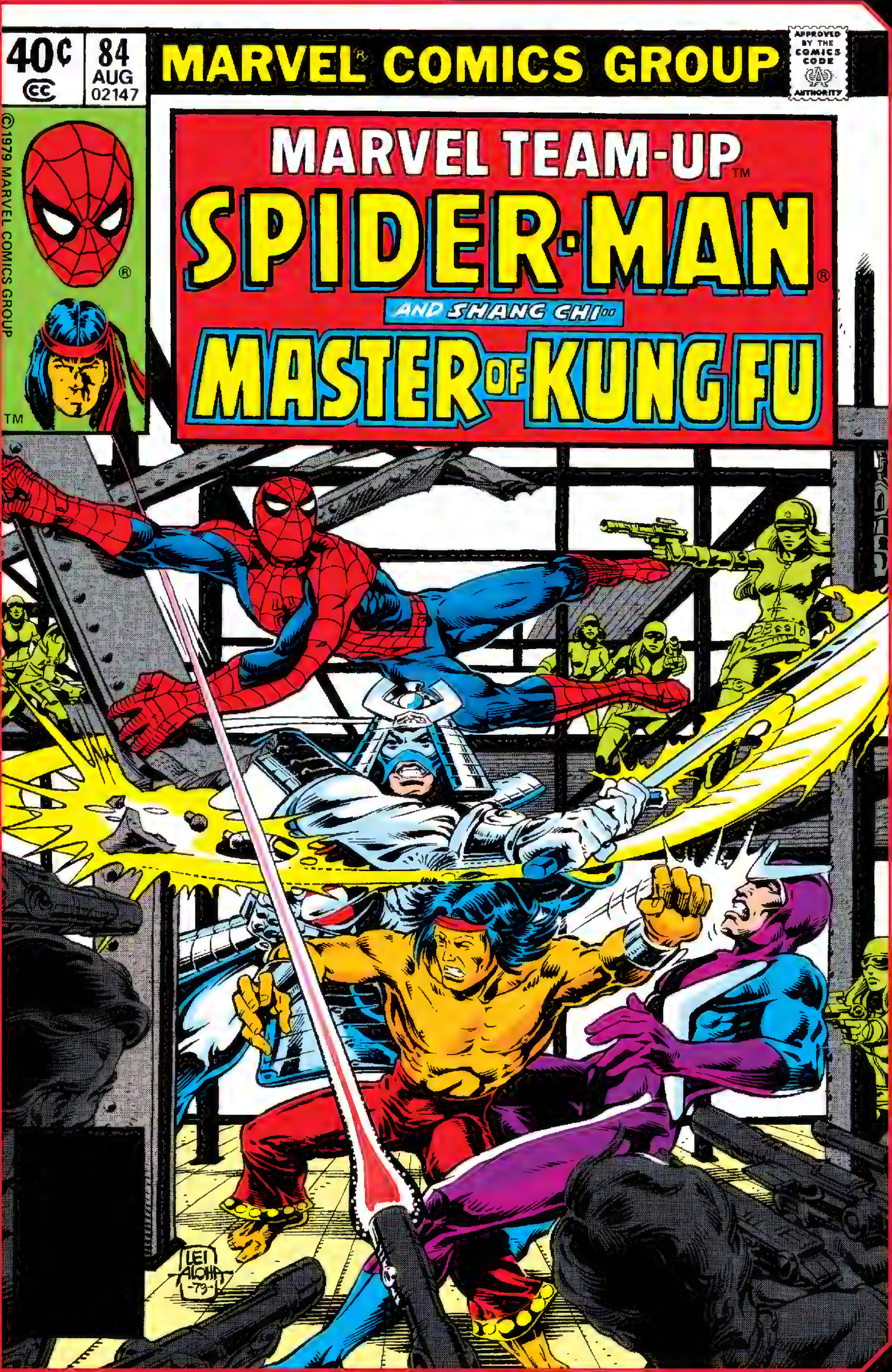

AN AMBUSH-- *BOOMERANG!*
PERFECT! FURY'S FORGOTTEN ABOUT ME. IN ALL THIS EXCITEMENT--
GO TO THE HEAD OF THE CLASS, HERO!
THE "BOOM"-ERANG I TOSSED AT YOUR PORSCHE MAY HAVE MISSED, COLONEL DARLIN'--
--NO ONE'S GOING TO NOTICE ME SLIPPING AWAY.
I'LL DUCK INTO THE BASEMENT, BUST THESE HANDCUFFS, AND THEN PULL THE FASTEST QUICK-CHANGE IN HISTORY.
HEADS UP, HOTSHOT!
--BUT YOU CAN REST ASSURED THAT THERE ARE A LOT MORE WHERE IT CAME FROM.
YOUR TOYS HAVE GOTTA HIT ME TO DO ANY GOOD, KILLER--
--AN' THAT AIN'T GONNA BE EASY!
PTAK!
SKAM!
WANNA BET, SWEETHEART?
YEAH, BOOMEY-- NAME YOUR ODDS!
THWAM!
SPIDER-MAN!
WHERE'D *YOU* COME FROM?!?


NICK FURY MAY NOT BE ONE OF MY FAVORITE PEOPLE RIGHT NOW, BUSTER--
--BUT THAT SURE DOESN'T MEAN I'M GONNA STAND BY AND WATCH HIM GUNNED DOWN BY A TWO-BIT HIRED ASSASSIN!
THEY LANDED ON THE ROOF ACROSS THE STREET!
STAY HERE, WIDOW-- AN' STAY UNDER COVER!
I'M GIVIN' THE WALL-CRAWLER A HAND!
Y-YES...STAY HERE WHERE IT'S SAFE...
NO!
I WANT TO HELP SPIDER-MAN-- I'VE GOT TO!
SUDDENLY...
SKRAMMM!
SPIDER-MAN!
HE'S NOT TRYING TO SAVE HIMSELF. THAT BLAST MUST HAVE STUNNED HIM!
HIS ONLY CHANCE...
...IS FOR ME TO BREAK HIS FALL.
WHOUUFFF!!
BOOMERANG'S... BOOT-JETS PACK ONE HECKUVA WALLOP. CAUGHT ME... HEAD-ON...THOUGHT I WAS FINISHED.
BUT... YOU SAVED ME!
WAY TO GO, RED!
!?!
STOP CLOWNING AROUND, MISTER--AND GET THESE HANDCUFFS OFF ME! DON'T YOU REALIZE--


"--NICK FURY'S ON THAT ROOF-TOP FIGHTING BOOMERANG ALONE!"
NOT FOR LONG, LADY!
NANCY'S VOICE, HER BEARING-- SUDDENLY EVERYTHING'S CHANGED.
SHE'S SOUNDING AND ACTING LIKE THE *BLACK WIDOW.*
DOES THAT MEAN SHE'S GETTING BETTER-- OR CURED, BACK TO NORMAL? PART OF ME HOPES SO...
...YET PART OF ME DOESN'T. I REALLY *LIKED* NANCY RUSHMAN.
HOLD THAT POSE, BOOMEY--
--AND SAY HELLO TO DREAMLAND.
YIKES!
THAT FLASH OF LIGHT BEHIND BOOMERANG, I'VE SEEN IT BEFORE!
OH, *NO!*
OH, YES, ARACHNID.
IT SEEMS WE MEET AGAIN.
AND IF THE FATES ARE KIND TO ME--
--THIS TIME SHALL BE THE LAST!
THE *SILVER SAMURAI!*
AND HE'S WEARING THAT CRAZY *TELEPORT* RING HE STOLE OFF JOHN BELUSHI.*
*SEE THE LEGENDARY MTU #74 --AL.


HIT THE DECK, PEOPLE! THAT ENERGY SWORD CAN CUT THROUGH STEEL LIKE BUTTER!
CRIPES-- THE SAMURAI'S FASTER THAN EVER! THAT SWIPE ALMOST TAGGED ME!
THEY'RE OFF-BALANCE, SAMURAI-- HELPLESS! FINISH THEM!
NOTHING WOULD GIVE ME GREATER PLEASURE, BOOMERANG.
BUT YOU ARE WRONG, OFF-BALANCE, PERHAPS-- BUT THESE THREE ARE FAR FROM HELPLESS.
HEED OUR MISTRESS' WORDS, AND OBEY: TOO MUCH IS AT STAKE TO RISK DEFEAT.
SO STAND BESIDE ME, COMRADE--
--WHILE THE AWESOME POWER OF MY RING...
...TELEPORTS US TO SAFETY.
POOF
WHAT THE--?!
NEAT TRICK, HUH? NOW IF WE ONLY KNEW WHERE THEY WERE GOING.
I THINK... I CAN TELL YOU THAT, MY FRIEND.
A LOT OF THINGS ARE STILL HAZY...
...BUT, IN BITS AND PIECES, MY MEMORY IS COMING BACK.
I'M STILL NOT SURE WHO I AM-- NANCY RUSHMAN OR... THE BLACK WIDOW-- BUT I DO KNOW THAT UNLESS WE ACT FAST...
...THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT HAS ONLY A FEW HOURS LEFT TO LIVE.

NEXT ISSUE: CATCH A FALLING HERO!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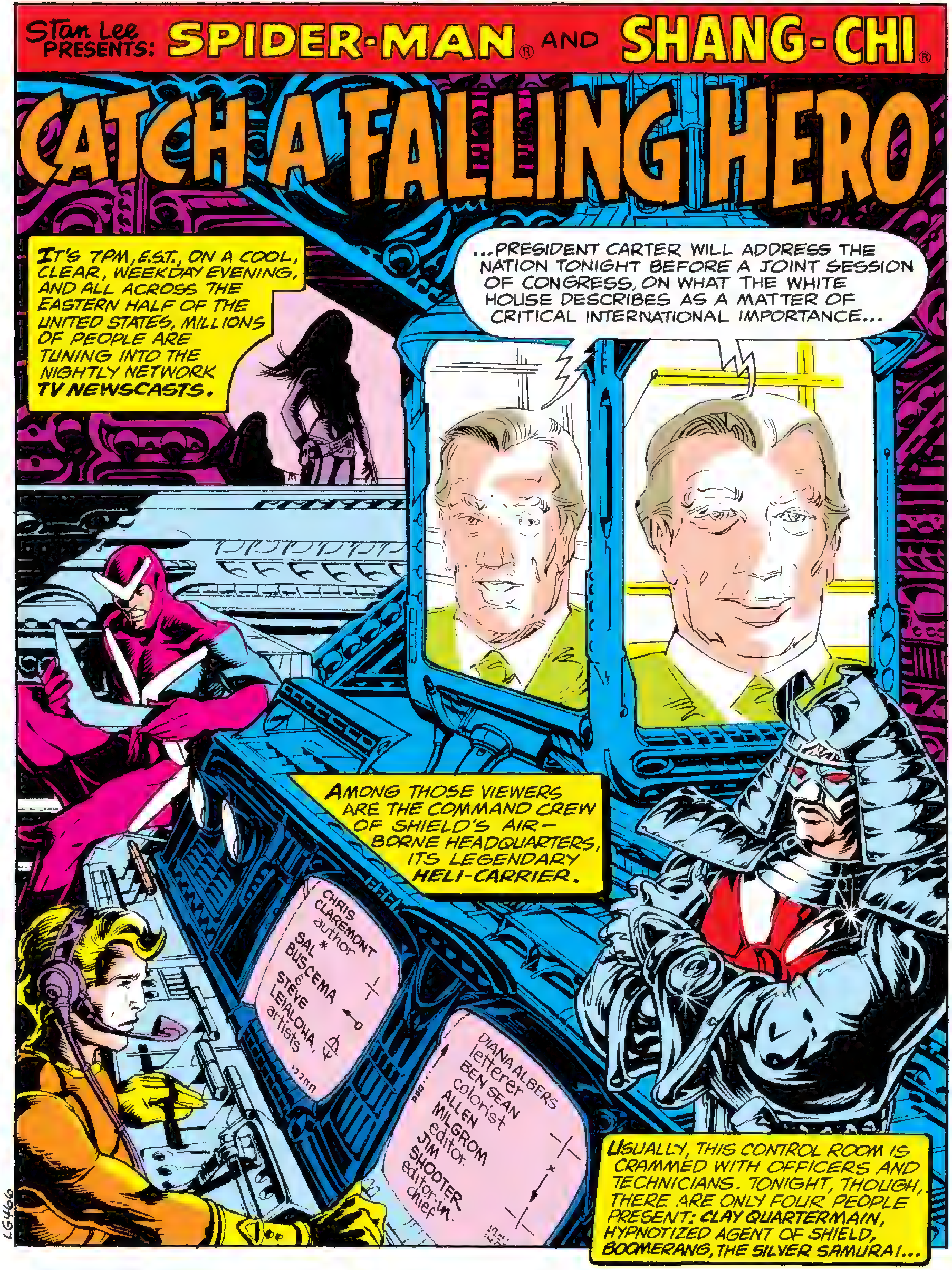
MARVEL TEAM-UP
SPIDER-MAN
AND SHANG CHI
MASTER OF KUNG FU
LEI ALOHA -79-


Stan Lee PRESENTS: SPIDER-MAN® AND SHANG-CHI®
CATCH A FALLING HERO
IT'S 7PM, E.S.T., ON A COOL, CLEAR, WEEKDAY EVENING, AND ALL ACROSS THE EASTERN HALF OF THE UNITED STATES, MILLIONS OF PEOPLE ARE TUNING INTO THE NIGHTLY NETWORK TV NEWSCASTS.
...PRESIDENT CARTER WILL ADDRESS THE NATION TONIGHT BEFORE A JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS, ON WHAT THE WHITE HOUSE DESCRIBES AS A MATTER OF CRITICAL INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE...
AMONG THOSE VIEWERS ARE THE COMMAND CREW OF SHIELD'S AIRBORNE HEADQUARTERS, ITS LEGENDARY HELI-CARRIER.
CHRIS CLAREMONT author * SAL BUSCEMA & STEVE LEIALOHA, artists
DIANA ALBERS letterer BEN SEAN colorist ALLEN MILGROM editor JIM SHOOTER editor-in-chief
USUALLY, THIS CONTROL ROOM IS CRAMMED WITH OFFICERS AND TECHNICIANS. TONIGHT, THOUGH, THERE ARE ONLY FOUR PEOPLE PRESENT: CLAY QUARTERMAIN, HYPNOTIZED AGENT OF SHIELD, BOOMERANG, THE SILVER SAMURAI...

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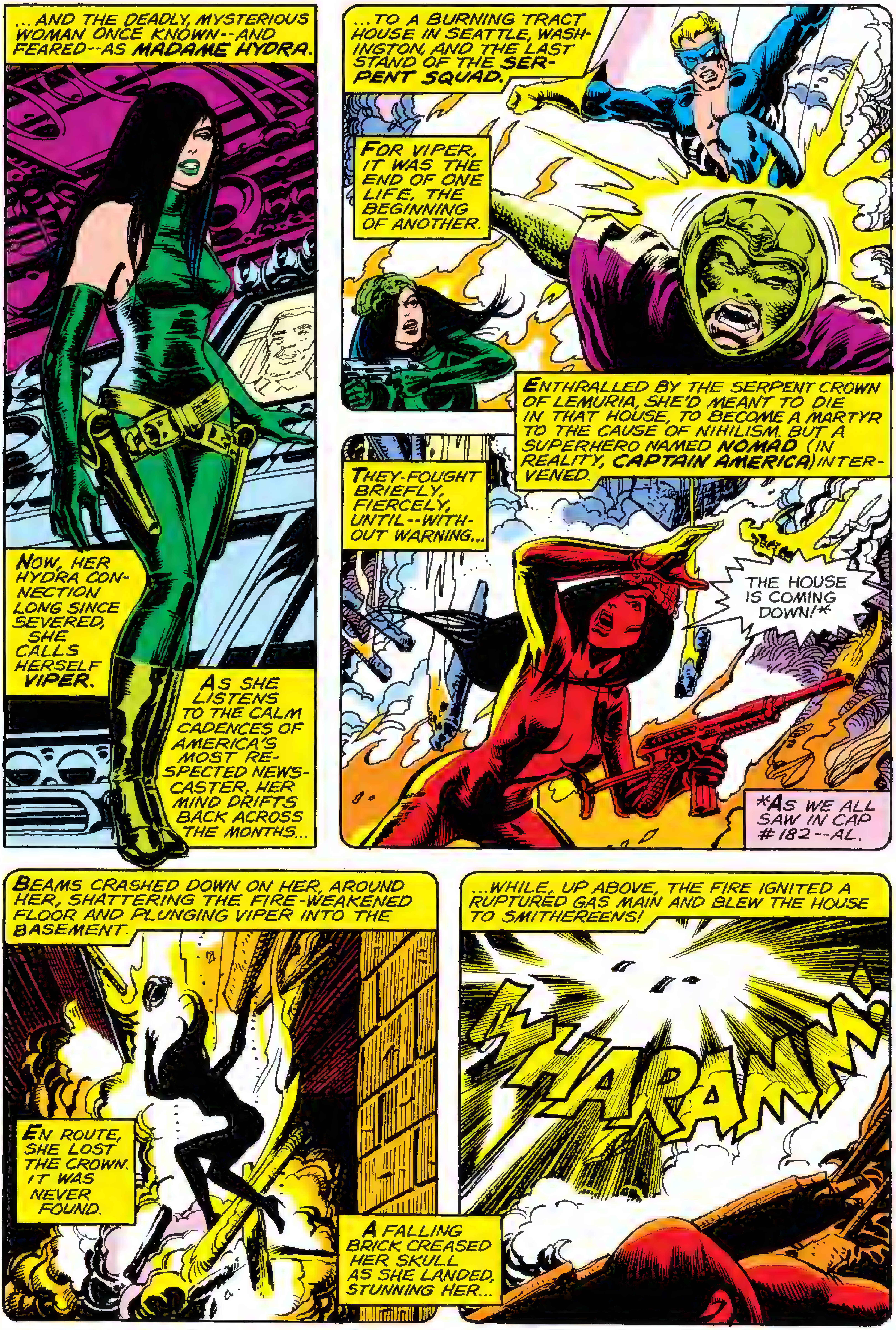
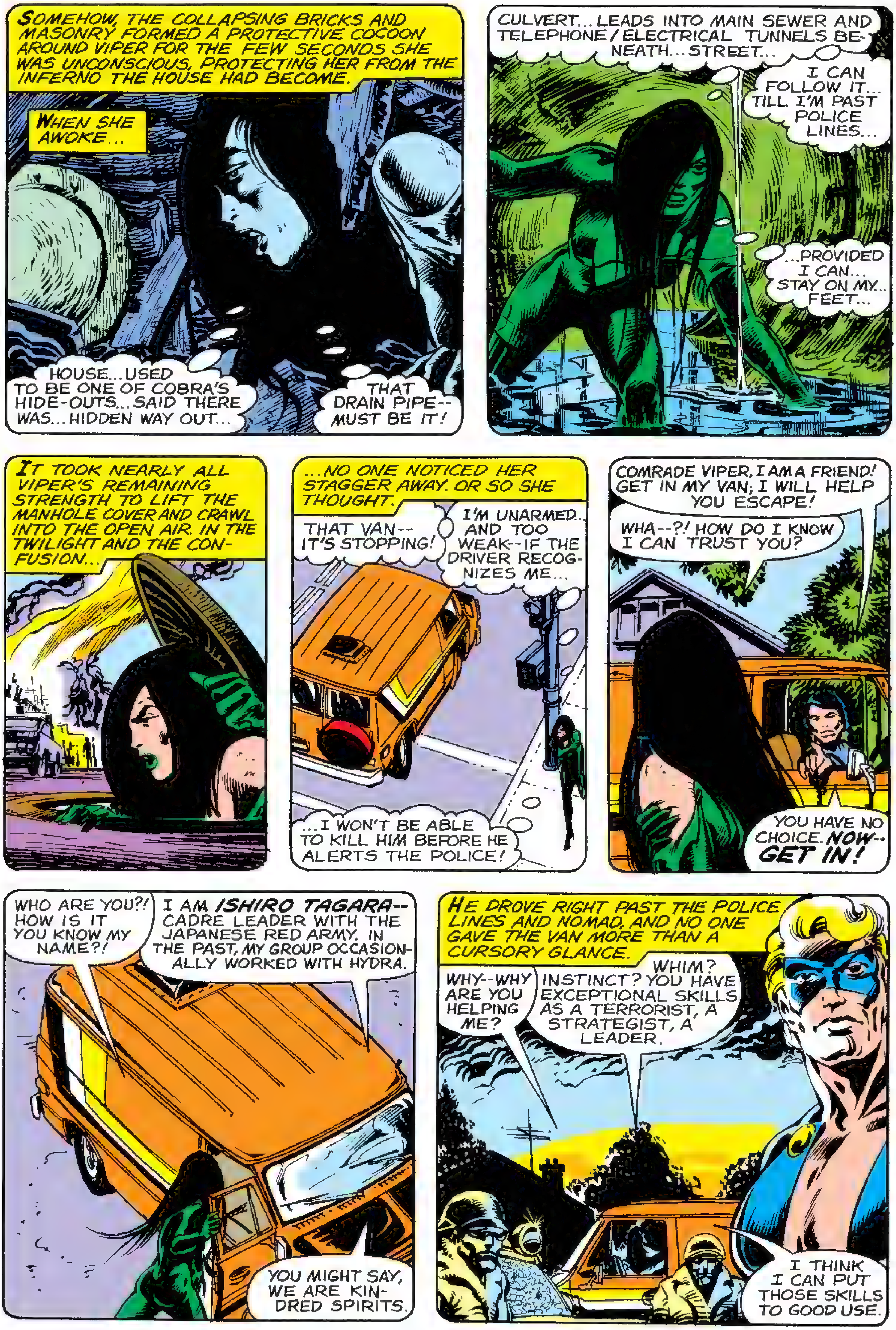
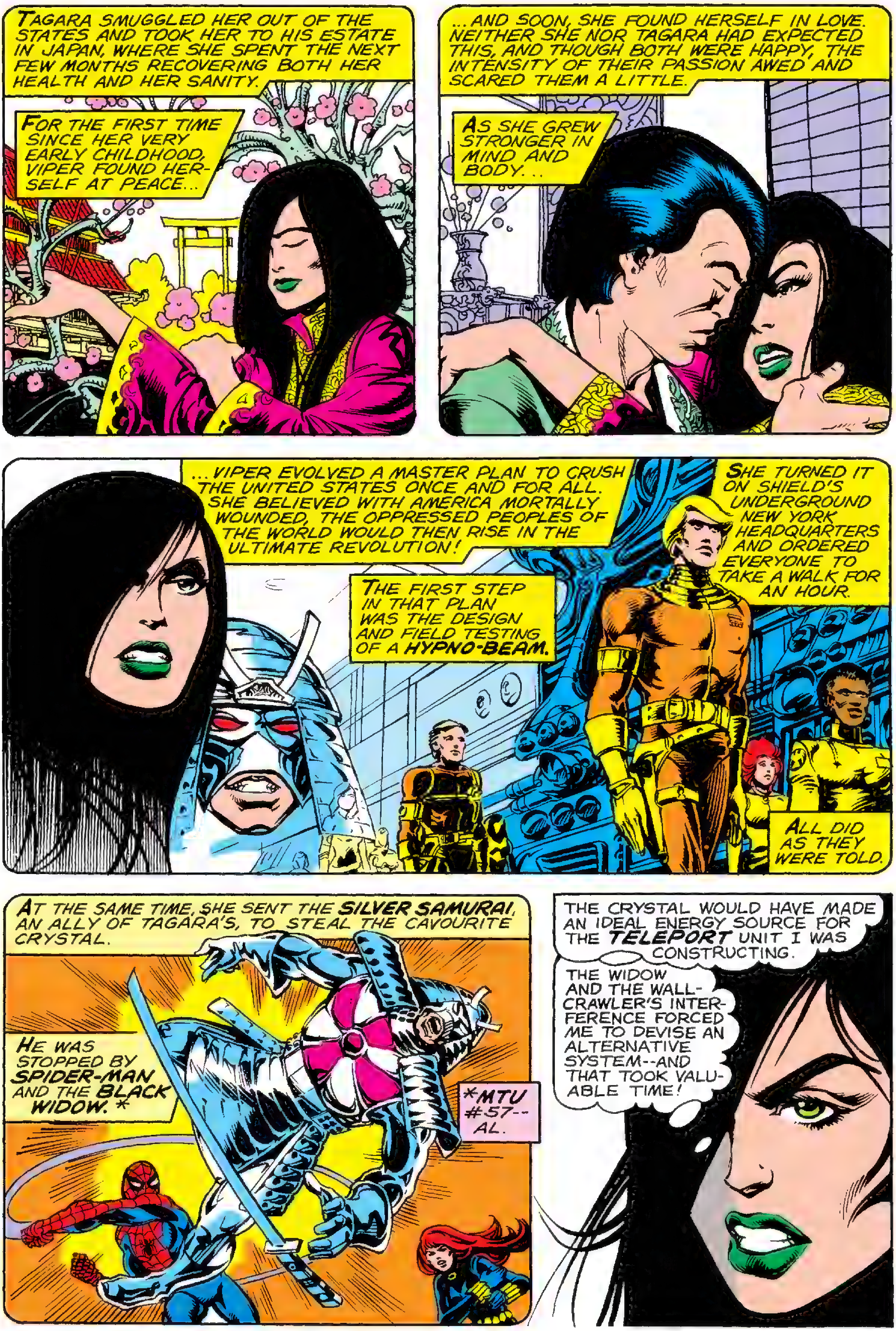
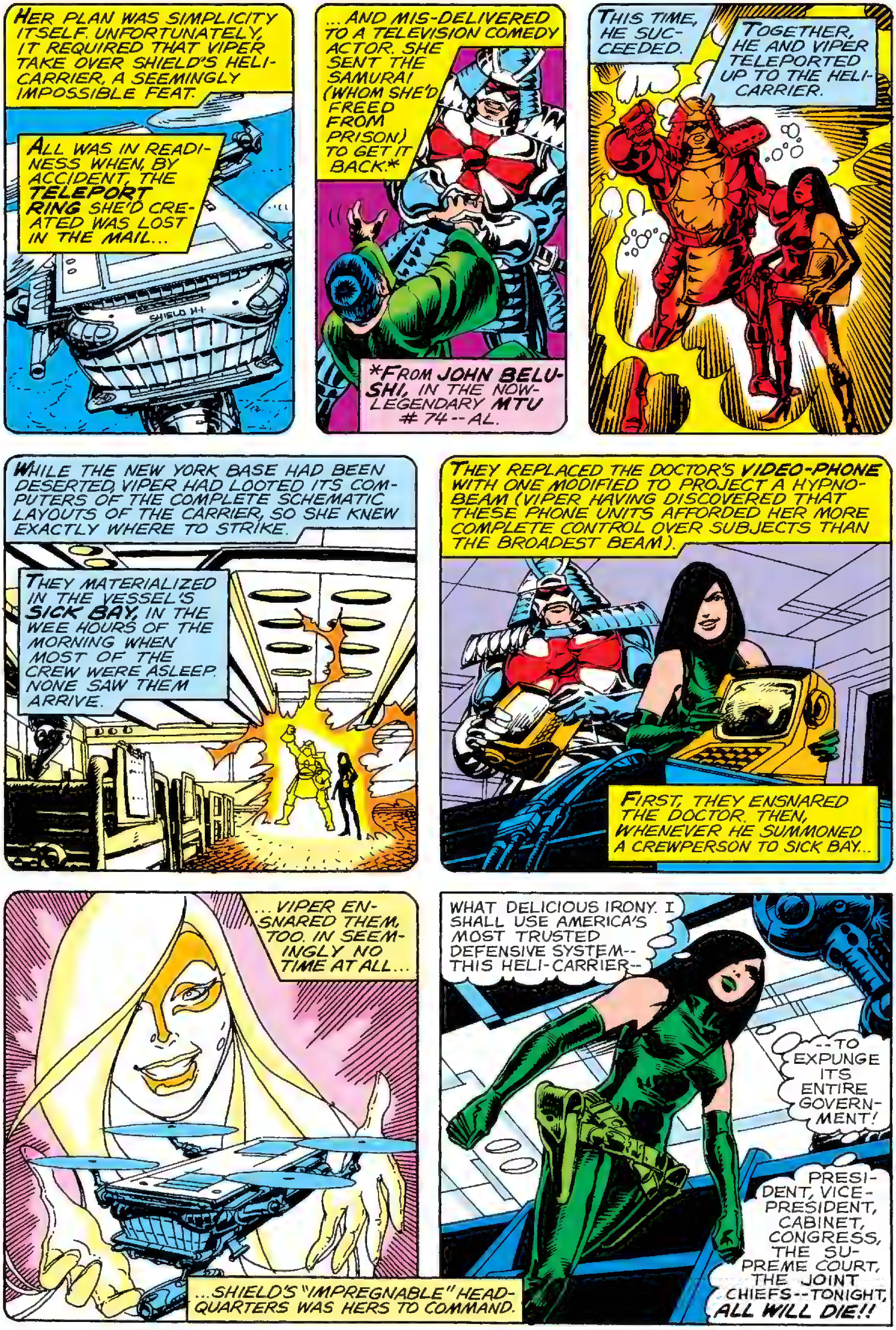
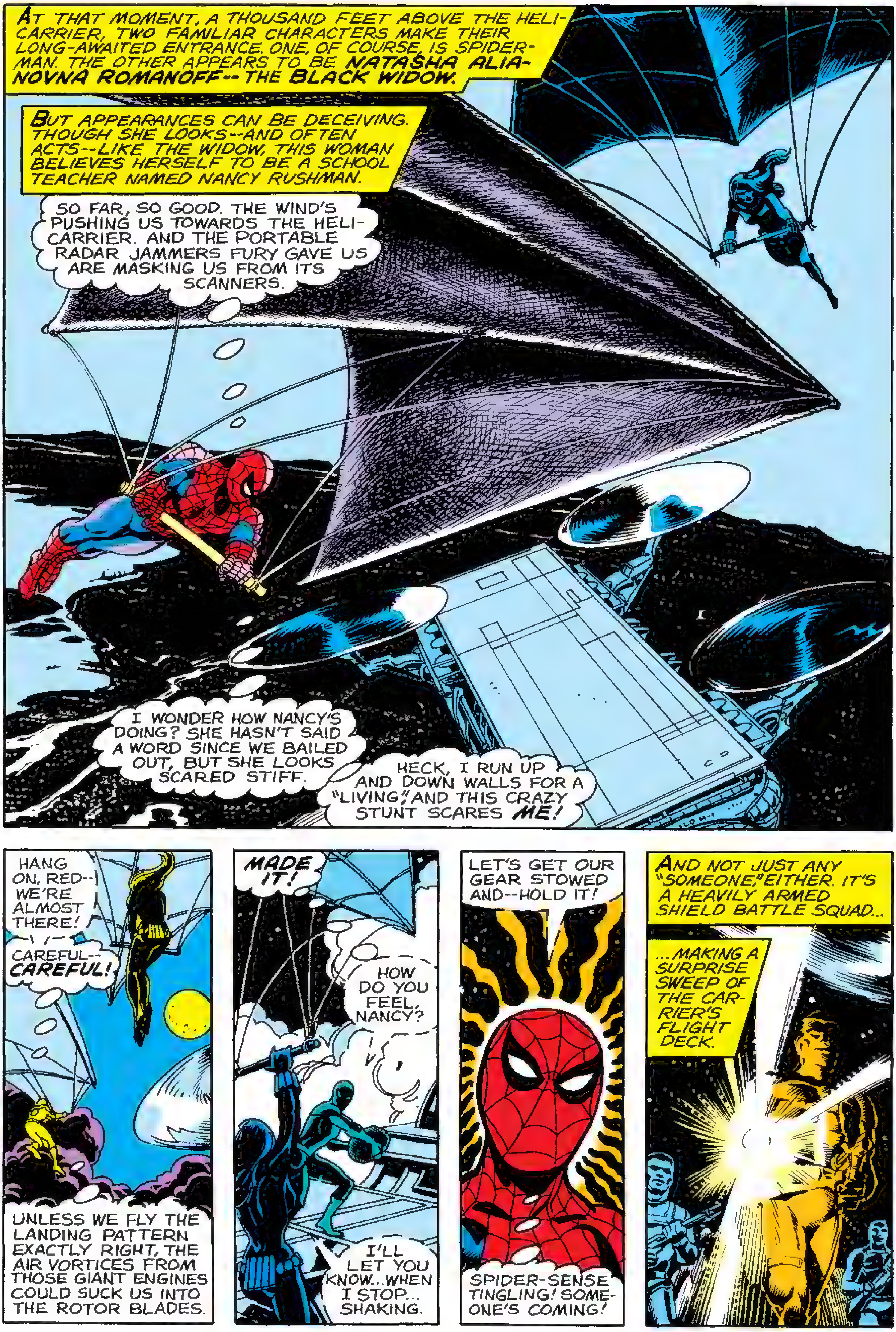
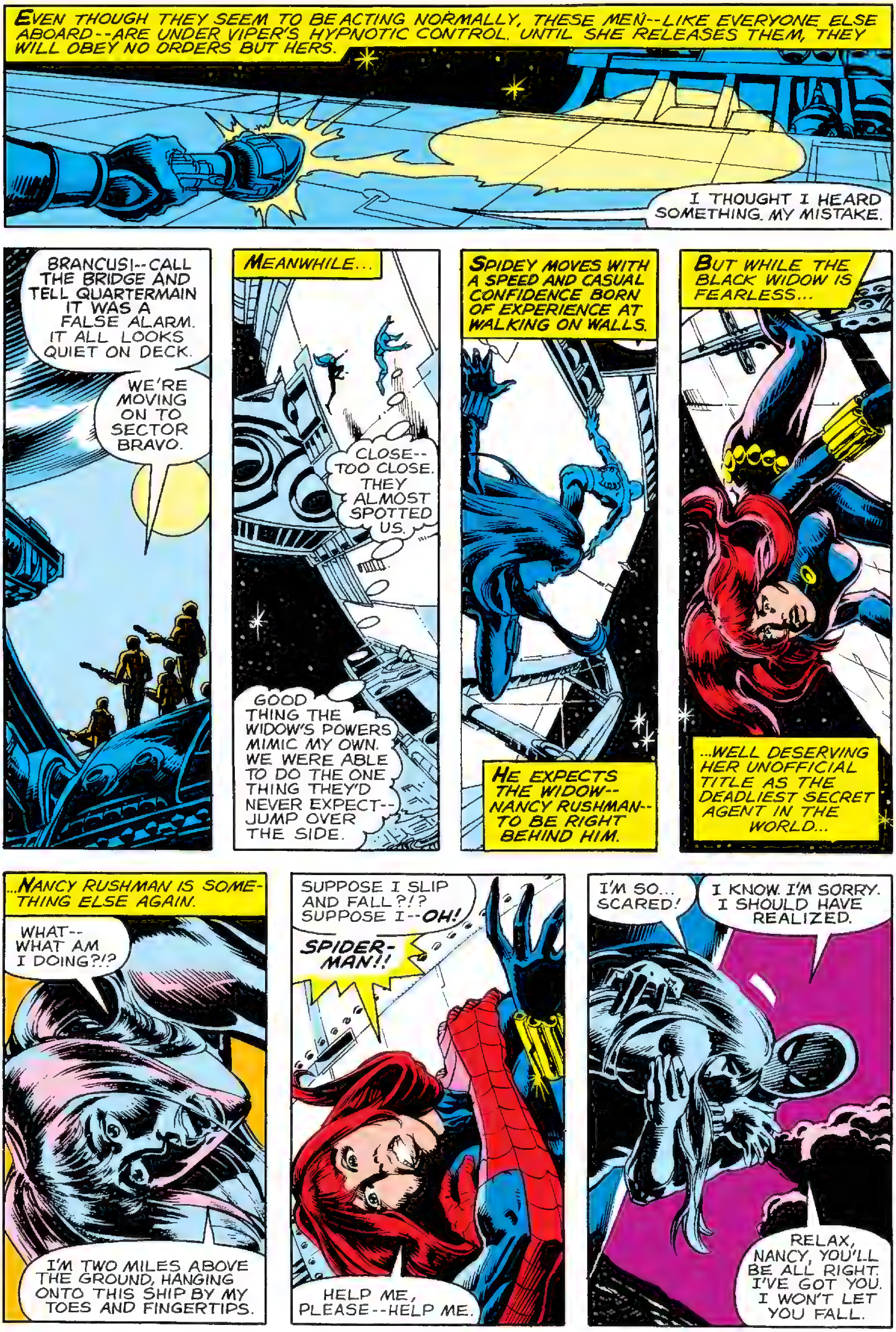

...AND THE DEADLY, MYSTERIOUS WOMAN ONCE KNOWN--AND FEARED--AS MADAME HYDRA.
NOW, HER HYDRA CONNECTION LONG SINCE SEVERED, SHE CALLS HERSELF VIPER.
AS SHE LISTENS TO THE CALM CADENCES OF AMERICA'S MOST RESPECTED NEWSCASTER, HER MIND DRIFTS BACK ACROSS THE MONTHS...
...TO A BURNING TRACT HOUSE IN SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, AND THE LAST STAND OF THE SERPENT SQUAD.
FOR VIPER, IT WAS THE END OF ONE LIFE, THE BEGINNING OF ANOTHER.
ENTHRALLED BY THE SERPENT CROWN OF LEMURIA, SHE'D MEANT TO DIE IN THAT HOUSE, TO BECOME A MARTYR TO THE CAUSE OF NIHILISM. BUT A SUPERHERO NAMED NOMAD (IN REALITY, CAPTAIN AMERICA) INTERVENED.
THEY FOUGHT BRIEFLY, FIERCELY, UNTIL--WITHOUT WARNING...
THE HOUSE IS COMING DOWN!*
*AS WE ALL SAW IN CAP #182--AL.
BEAMS CRASHED DOWN ON HER, AROUND HER, SHATTERING THE FIRE-WEAKENED FLOOR AND PLUNGING VIPER INTO THE BASEMENT.
EN ROUTE, SHE LOST THE CROWN. IT WAS NEVER FOUND.
A FALLING BRICK CREASED HER SKULL AS SHE LANDED, STUNNING HER...
...WHILE, UP ABOVE, THE FIRE IGNITED A RUPTURED GAS MAIN AND BLEW THE HOUSE TO SMITHEREENS!
WHAPAMM!

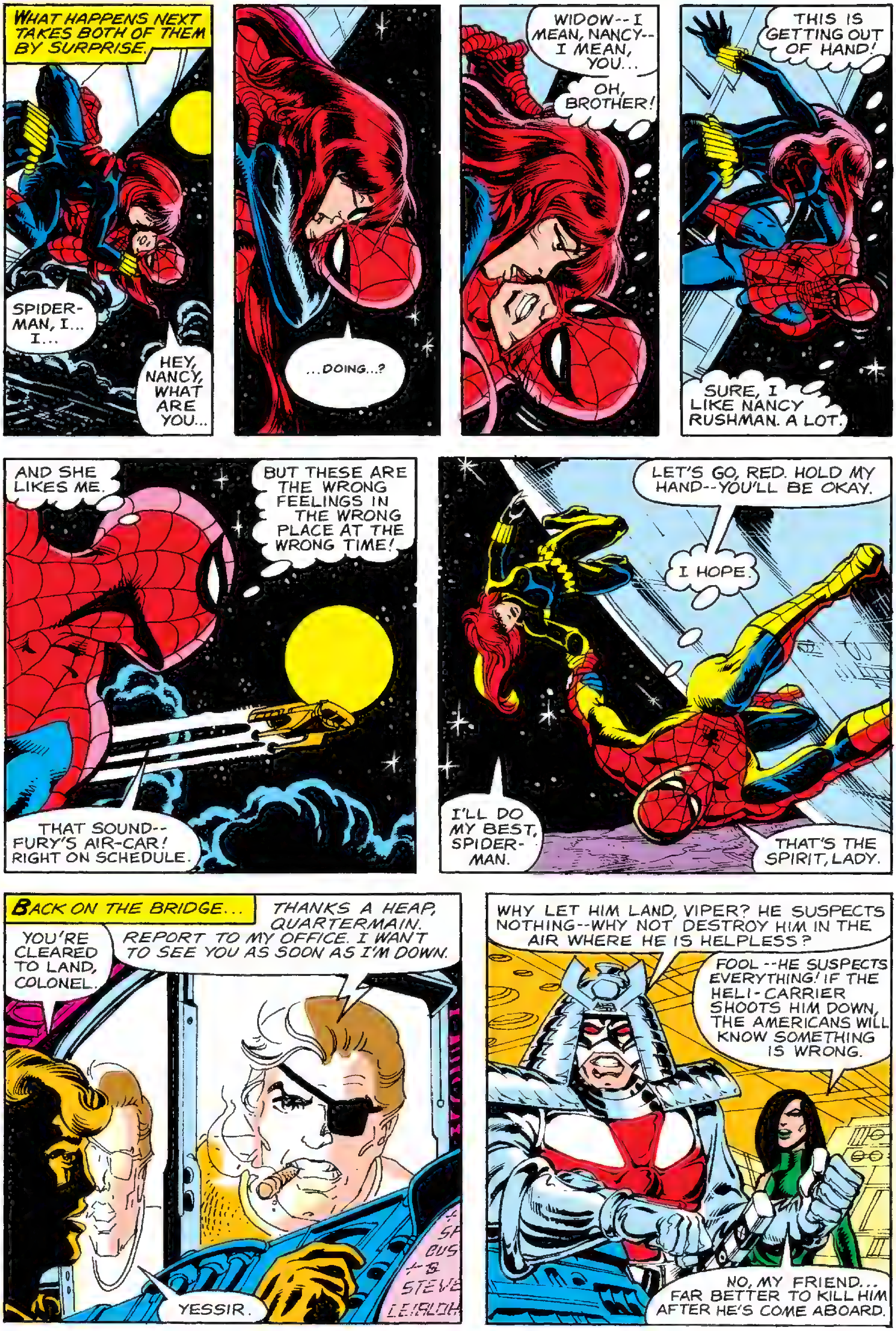

SOMEHOW, THE COLLAPSING BRICKS AND MASONRY FORMED A PROTECTIVE COCOON AROUND VIPER FOR THE FEW SECONDS SHE WAS UNCONSCIOUS, PROTECTING HER FROM THE INFERNO THE HOUSE HAD BECOME.
WHEN SHE AWOKE...
HOUSE...USED TO BE ONE OF COBRA'S HIDE-OUTS...SAID THERE WAS...HIDDEN WAY OUT...
THAT DRAIN PIPE-- MUST BE IT!
CULVERT...LEADS INTO MAIN SEWER AND TELEPHONE/ELECTRICAL TUNNELS BENEATH...STREET...
I CAN FOLLOW IT... TILL I'M PAST POLICE LINES...
...PROVIDED I CAN... STAY ON MY... FEET...
IT TOOK NEARLY ALL VIPER'S REMAINING STRENGTH TO LIFT THE MANHOLE COVER AND CRAWL INTO THE OPEN AIR. IN THE TWILIGHT AND THE CONFUSION...
...NO ONE NOTICED HER STAGGER AWAY. OR SO SHE THOUGHT.
THAT VAN-- IT'S STOPPING!
I'M UNARMED... AND TOO WEAK--IF THE DRIVER RECOGNIZES ME...
...I WON'T BE ABLE TO KILL HIM BEFORE HE ALERTS THE POLICE!
COMRADE VIPER, I AM A FRIEND! GET IN MY VAN; I WILL HELP YOU ESCAPE!
WHA--?! HOW DO I KNOW I CAN TRUST YOU?
YOU HAVE NO CHOICE. NOW-- GET IN!
WHO ARE YOU?! HOW IS IT YOU KNOW MY NAME?!
I AM ISHIRO TAGARA-- CADRE LEADER WITH THE JAPANESE RED ARMY. IN THE PAST, MY GROUP OCCASIONALLY WORKED WITH HYDRA.
YOU MIGHT SAY, WE ARE KINDRED SPIRITS.
HE DROVE RIGHT PAST THE POLICE LINES AND NOMAD, AND NO ONE GAVE THE VAN MORE THAN A CURSORY GLANCE.
WHY--WHY ARE YOU HELPING ME?
WHIM? INSTINCT? YOU HAVE EXCEPTIONAL SKILLS AS A TERRORIST, A STRATEGIST, A LEADER.
I THINK I CAN PUT THOSE SKILLS TO GOOD USE.

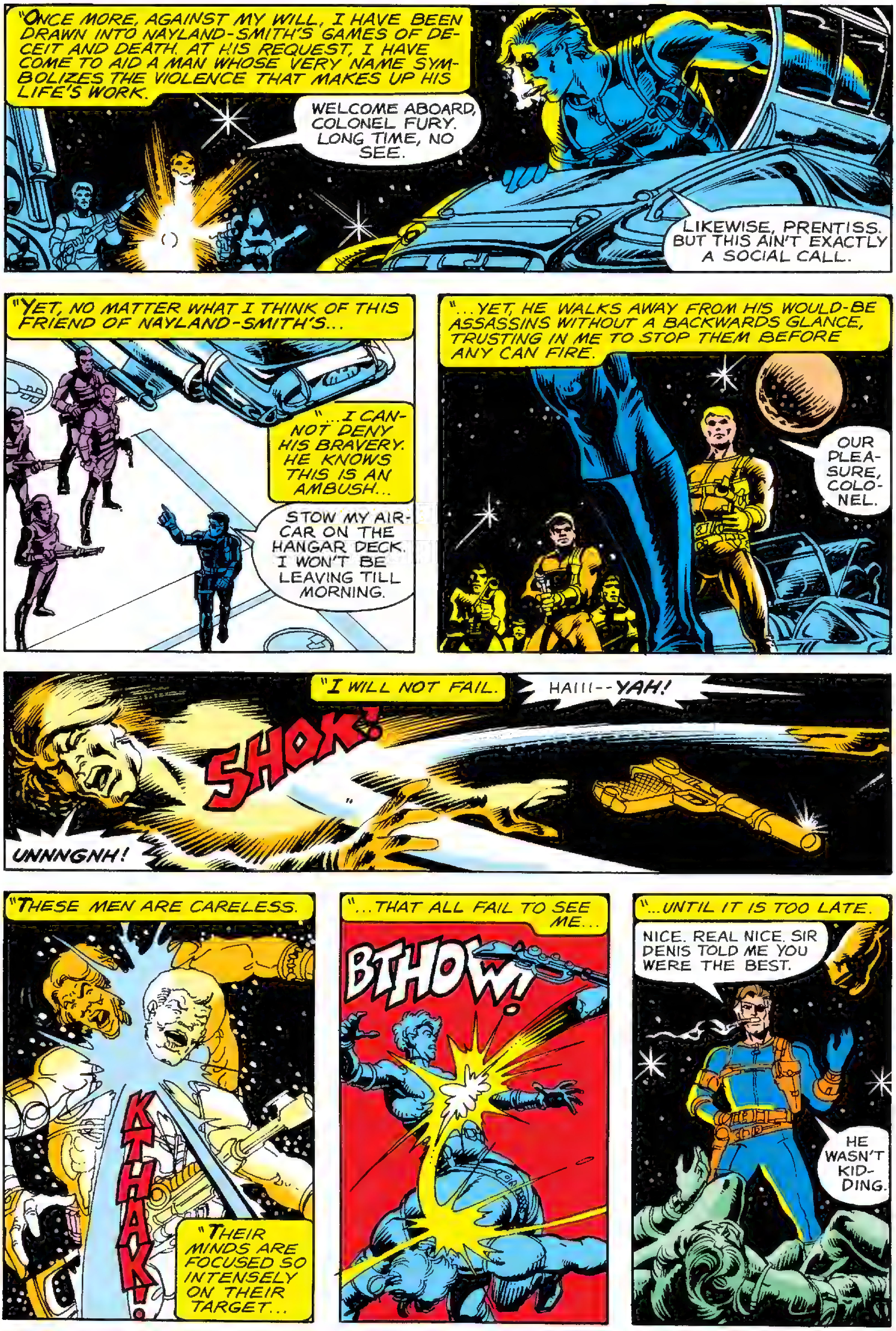

TAGARA SMUGGLED HER OUT OF THE STATES AND TOOK HER TO HIS ESTATE IN JAPAN, WHERE SHE SPENT THE NEXT FEW MONTHS RECOVERING BOTH HER HEALTH AND HER SANITY.
FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE HER VERY EARLY CHILDHOOD, VIPER FOUND HERSELF AT PEACE...
...AND SOON, SHE FOUND HERSELF IN LOVE. NEITHER SHE NOR TAGARA HAD EXPECTED THIS, AND THOUGH BOTH WERE HAPPY, THE INTENSITY OF THEIR PASSION AWED AND SCARED THEM A LITTLE.
AS SHE GREW STRONGER IN MIND AND BODY...
...VIPER EVOLVED A MASTER PLAN TO CRUSH THE UNITED STATES ONCE AND FOR ALL. SHE BELIEVED WITH AMERICA MORTALLY WOUNDED, THE OPPRESSED PEOPLES OF THE WORLD WOULD THEN RISE IN THE ULTIMATE REVOLUTION!
THE FIRST STEP IN THAT PLAN WAS THE DESIGN AND FIELD TESTING OF A **HYPNO-BEAM.**
SHE TURNED IT ON SHIELD'S UNDERGROUND NEW YORK HEADQUARTERS AND ORDERED EVERYONE TO TAKE A WALK FOR AN HOUR.
ALL DID AS THEY WERE TOLD.
AT THE SAME TIME, SHE SENT THE **SILVER SAMURAI**, AN ALLY OF TAGARA'S, TO STEAL THE CAVOURITE CRYSTAL.
HE WAS STOPPED BY **SPIDER-MAN** AND THE **BLACK WIDOW.** *
*MTU #57--AL.
THE CRYSTAL WOULD HAVE MADE AN IDEAL ENERGY SOURCE FOR THE **TELEPORT** UNIT I WAS CONSTRUCTING.
THE WIDOW AND THE WALL-CRAWLER'S INTERFERENCE FORCED ME TO DEVISE AN ALTERNATIVE SYSTEM--AND THAT TOOK VALUABLE TIME!]

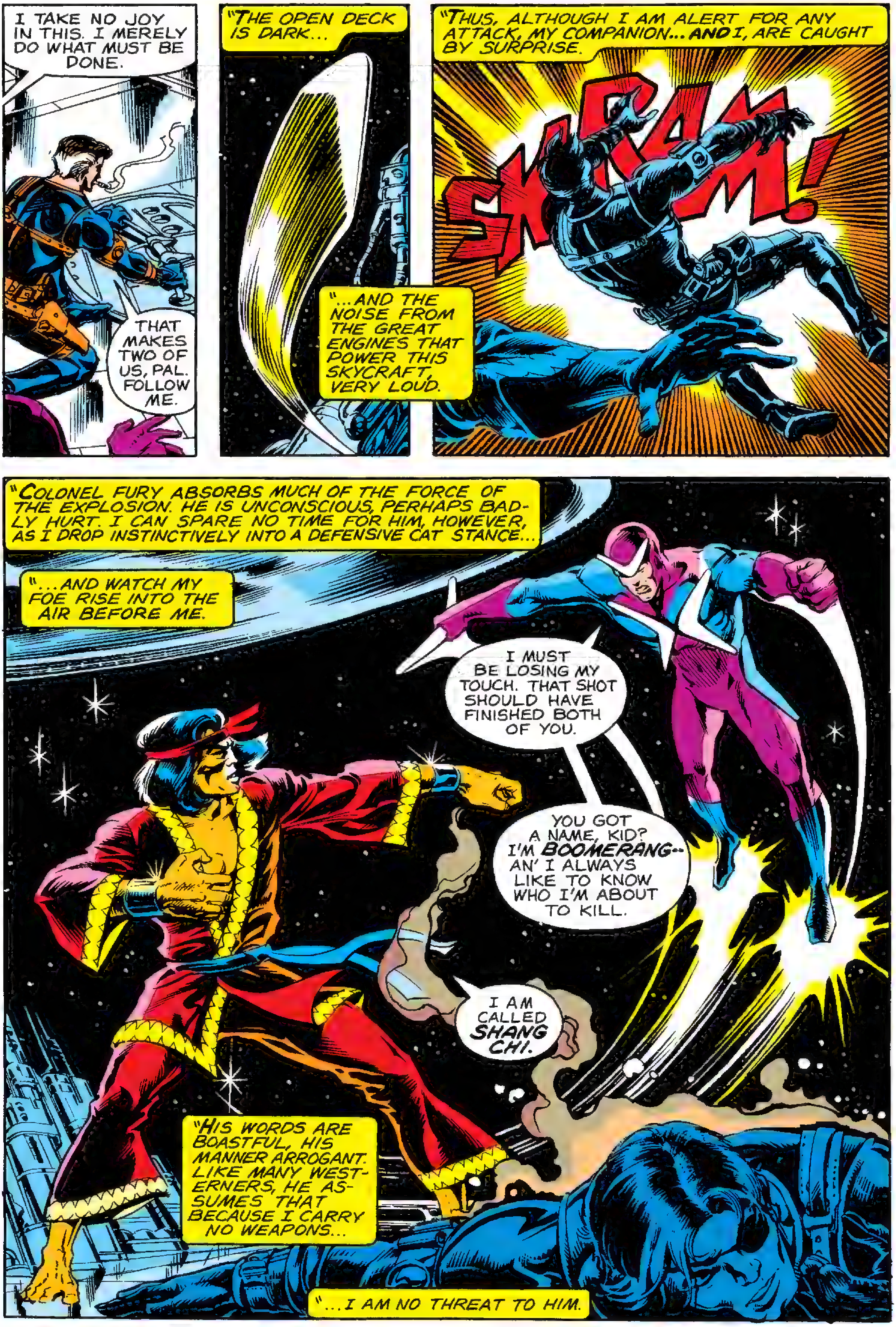

HER PLAN WAS SIMPLICITY ITSELF. UNFORTUNATELY, IT REQUIRED THAT VIPER TAKE OVER SHIELD'S HELI-CARRIER, A SEEMINGLY IMPOSSIBLE FEAT.
ALL WAS IN READINESS WHEN, BY ACCIDENT, THE TELEPORT RING SHE'D CREATED WAS LOST IN THE MAIL...
SHIELD H-1
...AND MIS-DELIVERED TO A TELEVISION COMEDY ACTOR. SHE SENT THE SAMURAI (WHOM SHE'D FREED FROM PRISON) TO GET IT BACK.*
*FROM JOHN BELUSHI, IN THE NOW-LEGENDARY MTU #74--AL.
THIS TIME, HE SUCCEEDED.
TOGETHER, HE AND VIPER TELEPORTED UP TO THE HELI-CARRIER.
WHILE THE NEW YORK BASE HAD BEEN DESERTED, VIPER HAD LOOTED ITS COMPUTERS OF THE COMPLETE SCHEMATIC LAYOUTS OF THE CARRIER, SO SHE KNEW EXACTLY WHERE TO STRIKE.
THEY MATERIALIZED IN THE VESSEL'S SICK BAY, IN THE WEE HOURS OF THE MORNING WHEN MOST OF THE CREW WERE ASLEEP. NONE SAW THEM ARRIVE.
THEY REPLACED THE DOCTOR'S VIDEO-PHONE WITH ONE MODIFIED TO PROJECT A HYPNO-BEAM (VIPER HAVING DISCOVERED THAT THESE PHONE UNITS AFFORDED HER MORE COMPLETE CONTROL OVER SUBJECTS THAN THE BROADEST BEAM).
FIRST, THEY ENSNARED THE DOCTOR. THEN, WHENEVER HE SUMMONED A CREWPERSON TO SICK BAY...
...VIPER ENSNARED THEM, TOO. IN SEEMINGLY NO TIME AT ALL...
...SHIELD'S "IMPREGNABLE" HEADQUARTERS WAS HERS TO COMMAND.
WHAT DELICIOUS IRONY. I SHALL USE AMERICA'S MOST TRUSTED DEFENSIVE SYSTEM-- THIS HELI-CARRIER--
--TO EXPUNGE ITS ENTIRE GOVERNMENT!
PRESIDENT, VICE-PRESIDENT, CABINET, CONGRESS, THE SUPREME COURT, THE JOINT CHIEFS--TONIGHT, ALL WILL DIE!!

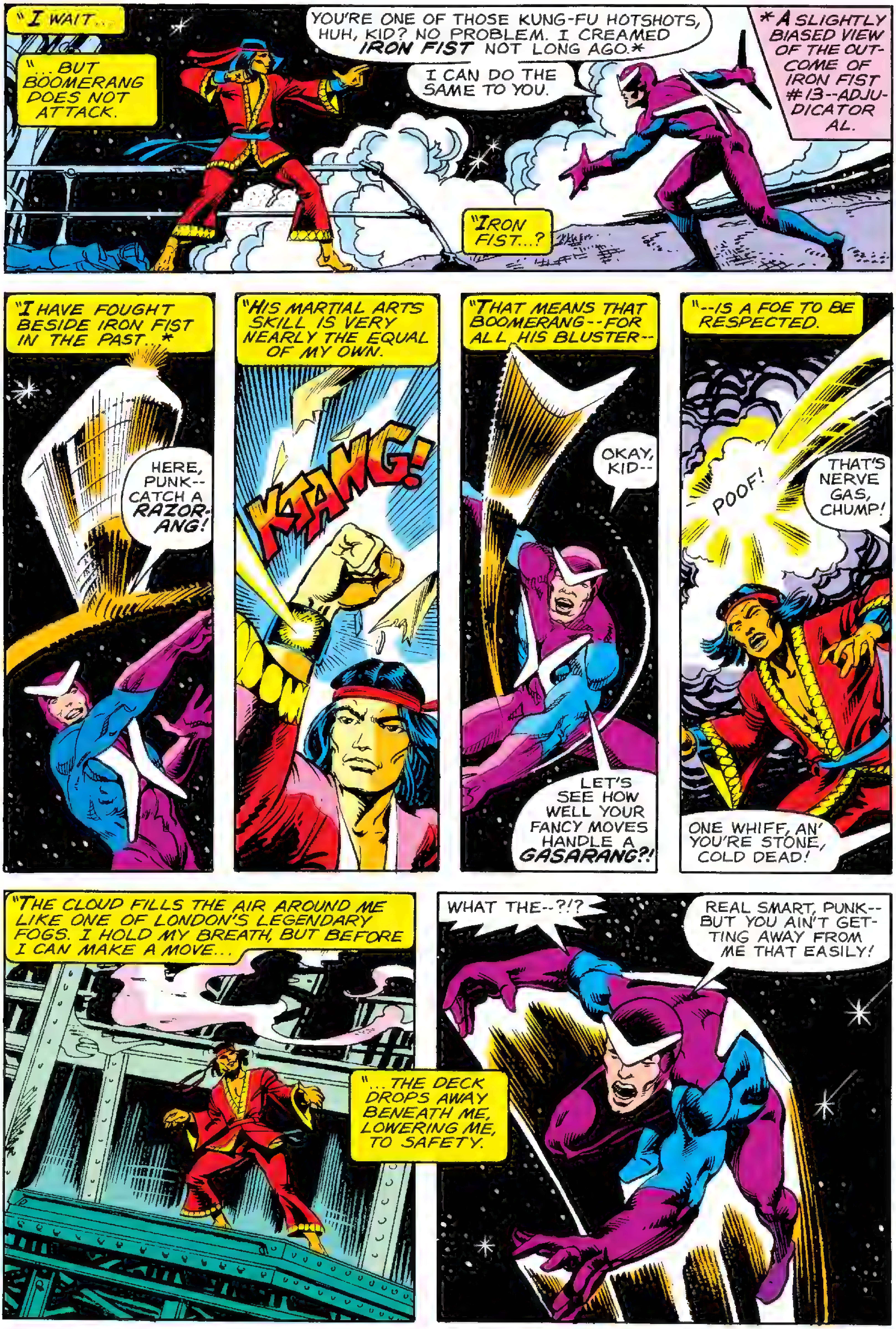

AT THAT MOMENT, A THOUSAND FEET ABOVE THE HELICARRIER, TWO FAMILIAR CHARACTERS MAKE THEIR LONG-AWAITED ENTRANCE. ONE, OF COURSE, IS SPIDER-MAN. THE OTHER APPEARS TO BE **NATASHA ALIANOVNA ROMANOFF--THE BLACK WIDOW.**
BUT APPEARANCES CAN BE DECEIVING. THOUGH SHE LOOKS--AND OFTEN ACTS--LIKE THE WIDOW, THIS WOMAN BELIEVES HERSELF TO BE A SCHOOL TEACHER NAMED NANCY RUSHMAN.
SO FAR, SO GOOD. THE WIND'S PUSHING US TOWARDS THE HELICARRIER. AND THE PORTABLE RADAR JAMMERS FURY GAVE US ARE MASKING US FROM ITS SCANNERS.
I WONDER HOW NANCY'S DOING? SHE HASN'T SAID A WORD SINCE WE BAILED OUT, BUT SHE LOOKS SCARED STIFF.
HECK, I RUN UP AND DOWN WALLS FOR A "LIVING," AND THIS CRAZY STUNT SCARES *ME!*
HANG ON, RED--WE'RE ALMOST THERE!
CAREFUL--**CAREFUL!**
UNLESS WE FLY THE LANDING PATTERN EXACTLY RIGHT, THE AIR VORTICES FROM THOSE GIANT ENGINES COULD SUCK US INTO THE ROTOR BLADES.
MADE IT!
HOW DO YOU FEEL, NANCY?
I'LL LET YOU KNOW...WHEN I STOP... SHAKING.
LET'S GET OUR GEAR STOWED AND--HOLD IT!
SPIDER-SENSE TINGLING! SOMEONE'S COMING!
AND NOT JUST ANY "SOMEONE," EITHER. IT'S A HEAVILY ARMED SHIELD BATTLE SQUAD...
...MAKING A SURPRISE SWEEP OF THE CARRIER'S FLIGHT DECK.

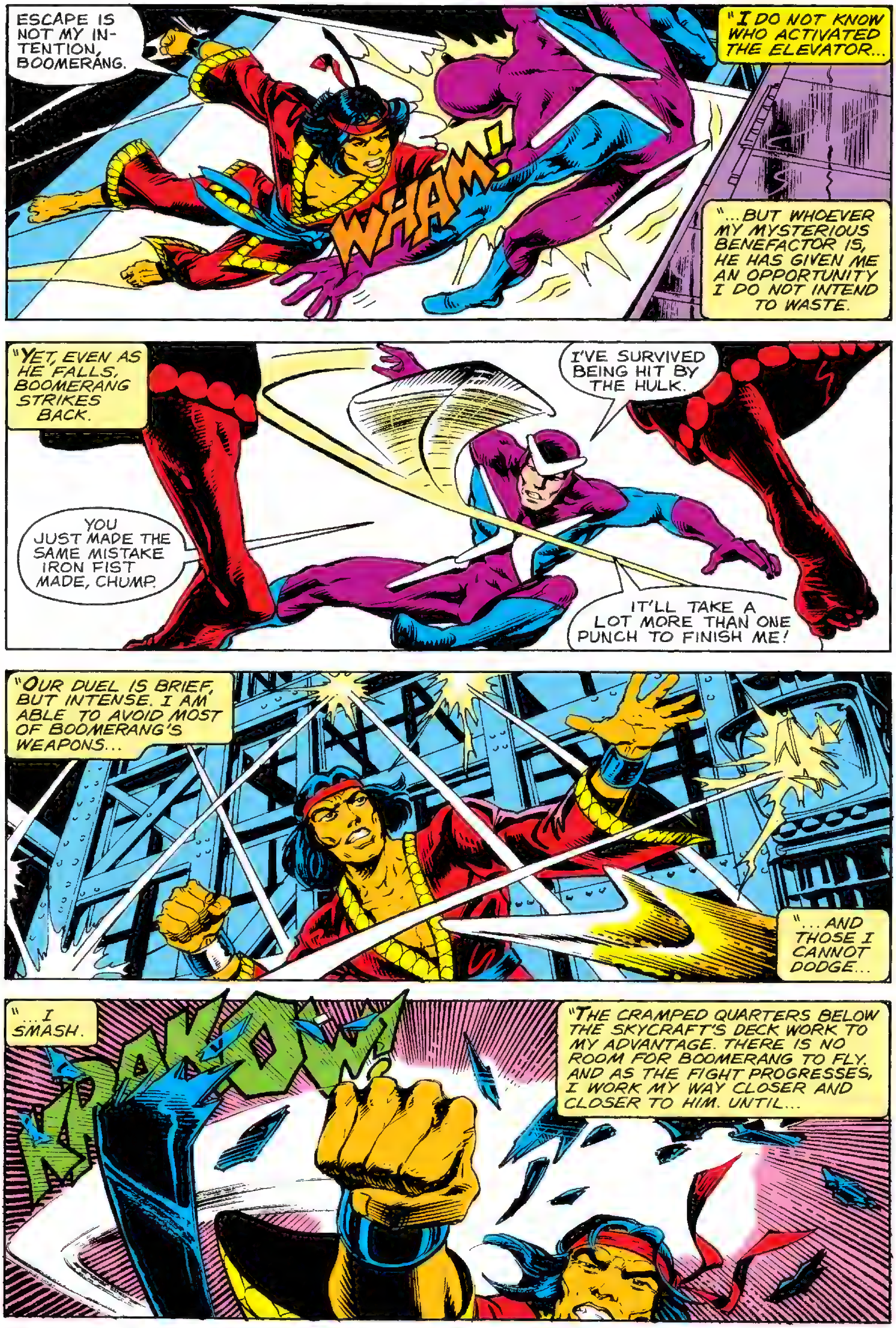

EVEN THOUGH THEY SEEM TO BE ACTING NORMALLY, THESE MEN--LIKE EVERYONE ELSE ABOARD--ARE UNDER VIPER'S HYPNOTIC CONTROL. UNTIL SHE RELEASES THEM, THEY WILL OBEY NO ORDERS BUT HERS.
I THOUGHT I HEARD SOMETHING. MY MISTAKE.
BRANCUSI--CALL THE BRIDGE AND TELL QUARTERMAIN IT WAS A FALSE ALARM. IT ALL LOOKS QUIET ON DECK.
WE'RE MOVING ON TO SECTOR BRAVO.
MEANWHILE...
CLOSE--TOO CLOSE. THEY ALMOST SPOTTED US.
GOOD THING THE WIDOW'S POWERS MIMIC MY OWN. WE WERE ABLE TO DO THE ONE THING THEY'D NEVER EXPECT--JUMP OVER THE SIDE.
SPIDEY MOVES WITH A SPEED AND CASUAL CONFIDENCE BORN OF EXPERIENCE AT WALKING ON WALLS.
HE EXPECTS THE WIDOW--NANCY RUSHMAN--TO BE RIGHT BEHIND HIM.
BUT WHILE THE BLACK WIDOW IS FEARLESS...
...WELL DESERVING HER UNOFFICIAL TITLE AS THE DEADLIEST SECRET AGENT IN THE WORLD...
...NANCY RUSHMAN IS SOMETHING ELSE AGAIN.
WHAT--WHAT AM I DOING?!?
I'M TWO MILES ABOVE THE GROUND, HANGING ONTO THIS SHIP BY MY TOES AND FINGERTIPS.
SUPPOSE I SLIP AND FALL?!? SUPPOSE I--OH!
SPIDER-MAN!!
HELP ME, PLEASE--HELP ME.
I'M SO... SCARED!
I KNOW. I'M SORRY. I SHOULD HAVE REALIZED.
RELAX, NANCY, YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT. I'VE GOT YOU. I WON'T LET YOU FALL.

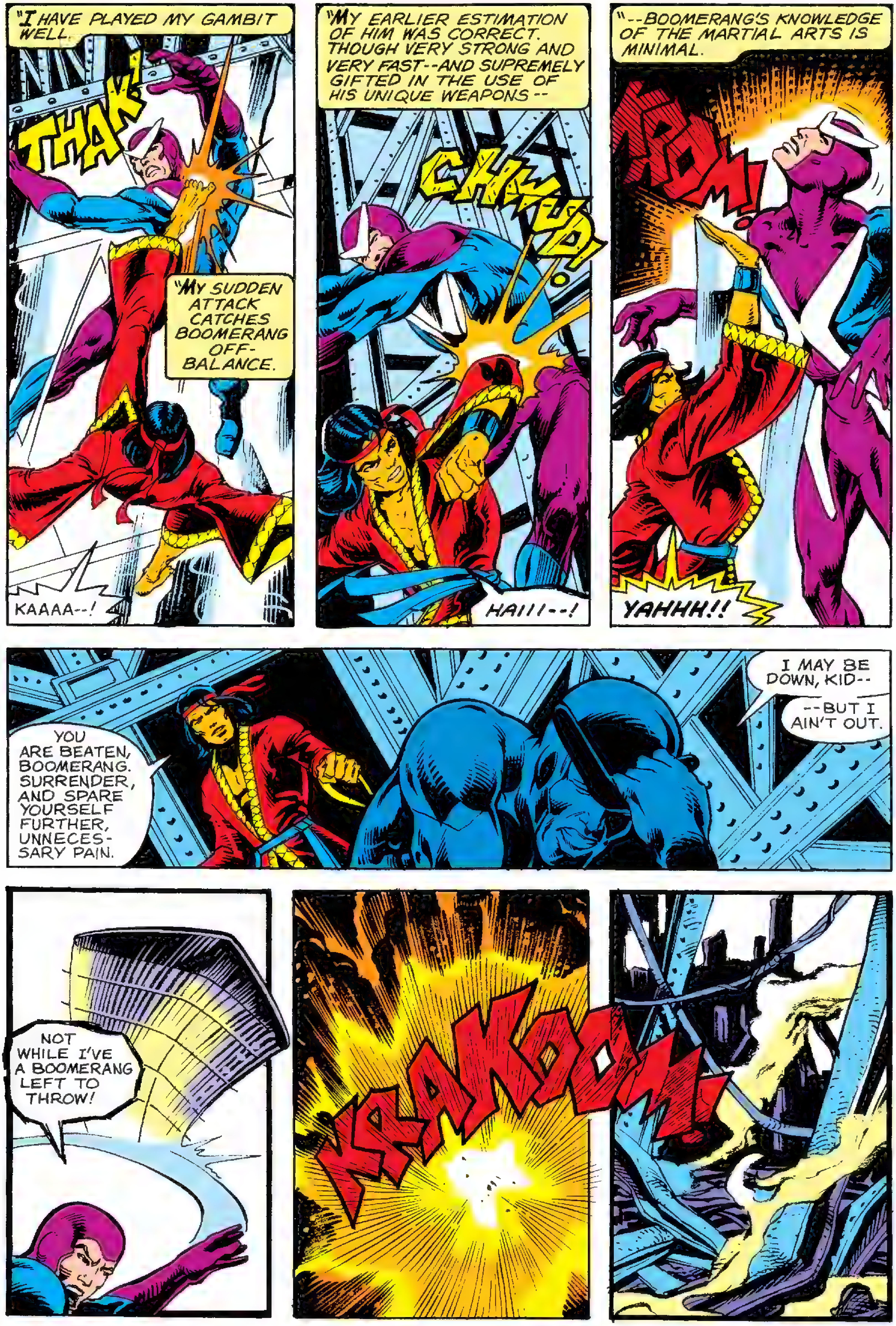

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT TAKES BOTH OF THEM BY SURPRISE.
SPIDER-MAN, I... I...
HEY, NANCY, WHAT ARE YOU...
...DOING...?
WIDOW--I MEAN, NANCY--I MEAN, YOU...
OH, BROTHER!
THIS IS GETTING OUT OF HAND!
SURE, I LIKE NANCY RUSHMAN. A LOT.
AND SHE LIKES ME.
BUT THESE ARE THE WRONG FEELINGS IN THE WRONG PLACE AT THE WRONG TIME!
THAT SOUND--FURY'S AIR-CAR! RIGHT ON SCHEDULE.
LET'S GO, RED. HOLD MY HAND--YOU'LL BE OKAY.
I HOPE.
I'LL DO MY BEST, SPIDER-MAN.
THAT'S THE SPIRIT, LADY.
BACK ON THE BRIDGE...
YOU'RE CLEARED TO LAND, COLONEL.
THANKS A HEAP, QUARTERMAIN. REPORT TO MY OFFICE. I WANT TO SEE YOU AS SOON AS I'M DOWN.
YESSIR.
WHY LET HIM LAND, VIPER? HE SUSPECTS NOTHING--WHY NOT DESTROY HIM IN THE AIR WHERE HE IS HELPLESS?
FOOL--HE SUSPECTS EVERYTHING! IF THE HELI-CARRIER SHOOTS HIM DOWN, THE AMERICANS WILL KNOW SOMETHING IS WRONG.
NO, MY FRIEND... FAR BETTER TO KILL HIM AFTER HE'S COME ABOARD.

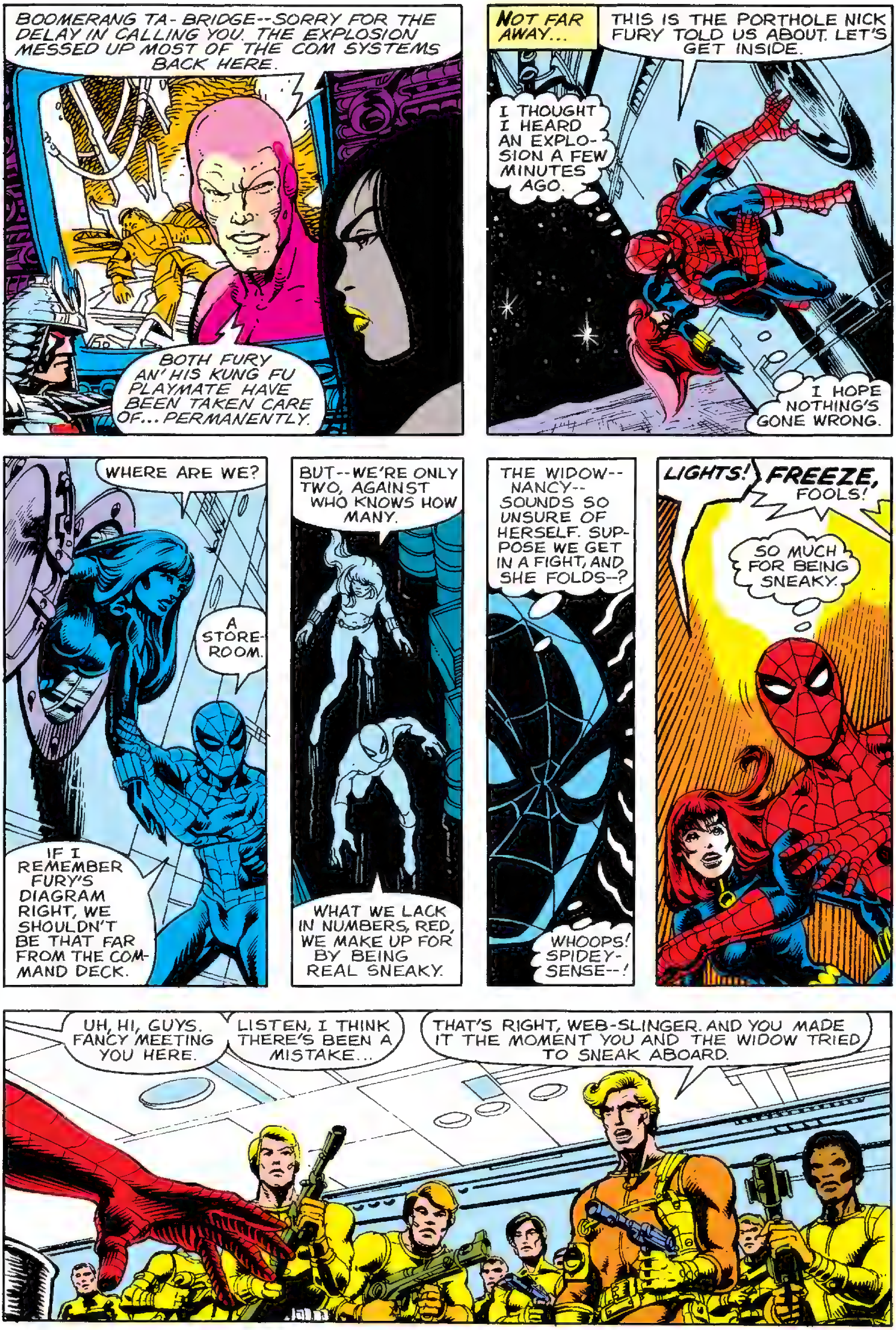

"ONCE MORE, AGAINST MY WILL, I HAVE BEEN DRAWN INTO NAYLAND-SMITH'S GAMES OF DECEIT AND DEATH. AT HIS REQUEST, I HAVE COME TO AID A MAN WHOSE VERY NAME SYMBOLIZES THE VIOLENCE THAT MAKES UP HIS LIFE'S WORK.
WELCOME ABOARD, COLONEL FURY. LONG TIME, NO SEE.
LIKEWISE, PRENTISS. BUT THIS AIN'T EXACTLY A SOCIAL CALL.
"YET, NO MATTER WHAT I THINK OF THIS FRIEND OF NAYLAND-SMITH'S...
"...I CANNOT DENY HIS BRAVERY. HE KNOWS THIS IS AN AMBUSH...
STOW MY AIR-CAR ON THE HANGAR DECK. I WON'T BE LEAVING TILL MORNING.
"...YET, HE WALKS AWAY FROM HIS WOULD-BE ASSASSINS WITHOUT A BACKWARDS GLANCE, TRUSTING IN ME TO STOP THEM BEFORE ANY CAN FIRE.
OUR PLEASURE, COLONEL.
"I WILL NOT FAIL.
HAIII--YAH!
SHOK!
UNNNGNH!
"THESE MEN ARE CARELESS.
KTHAK!
"THEIR MINDS ARE FOCUSED SO INTENSELY ON THEIR TARGET...
"...THAT ALL FAIL TO SEE ME...
BTHOW!
"...UNTIL IT IS TOO LATE.
NICE. REAL NICE. SIR DENIS TOLD ME YOU WERE THE BEST.
HE WASN'T KIDDING.

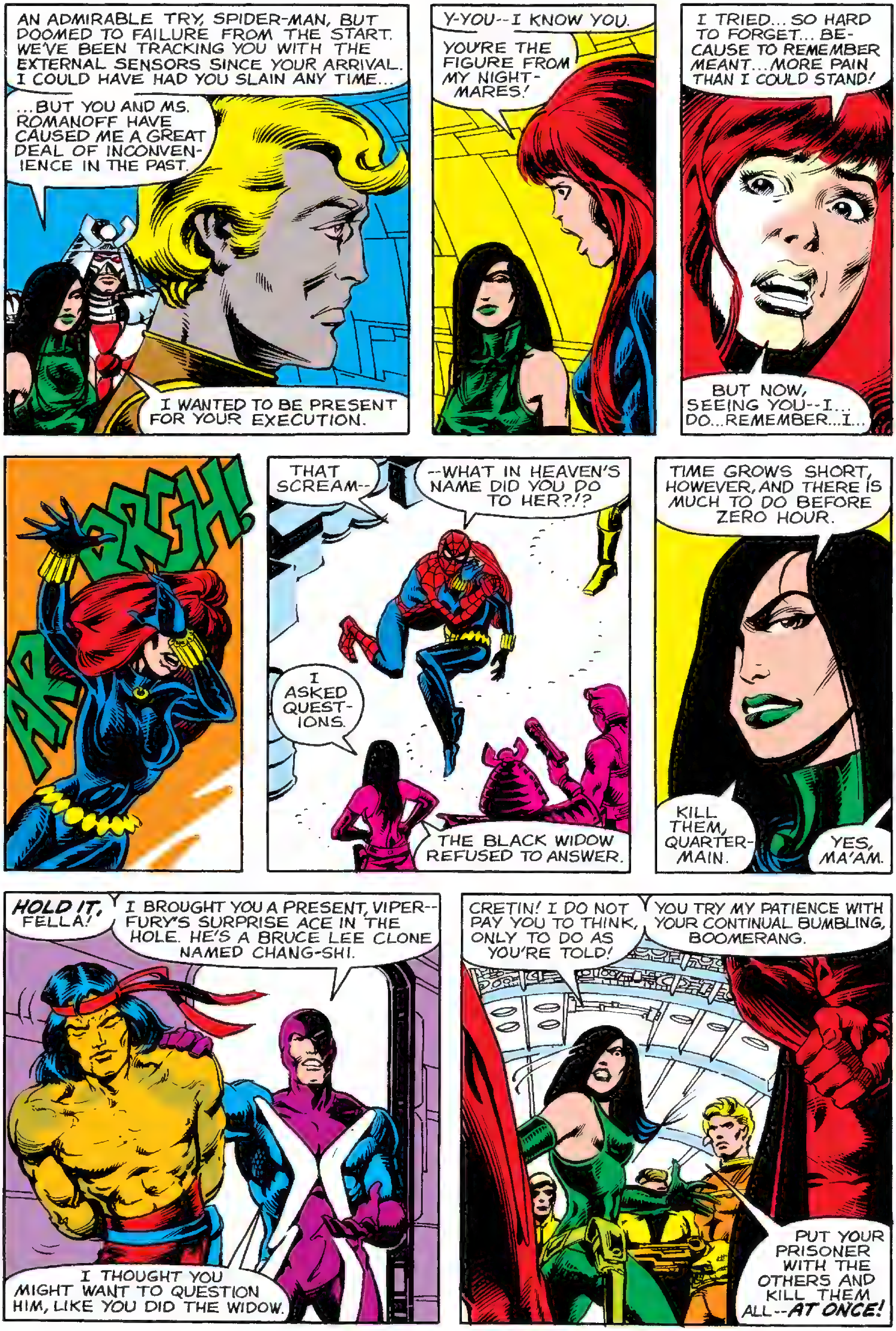

I TAKE NO JOY IN THIS. I MERELY DO WHAT MUST BE DONE.
THAT MAKES TWO OF US, PAL. FOLLOW ME.
"THE OPEN DECK IS DARK...
"...AND THE NOISE FROM THE GREAT ENGINES THAT POWER THIS SKYCRAFT, VERY LOUD.
"THUS, ALTHOUGH I AM ALERT FOR ANY ATTACK, MY COMPANION... AND I, ARE CAUGHT BY SURPRISE.
SKRAM!
"COLONEL FURY ABSORBS MUCH OF THE FORCE OF THE EXPLOSION. HE IS UNCONSCIOUS, PERHAPS BADLY HURT. I CAN SPARE NO TIME FOR HIM, HOWEVER, AS I DROP INSTINCTIVELY INTO A DEFENSIVE CAT STANCE...
"...AND WATCH MY FOE RISE INTO THE AIR BEFORE ME.
I MUST BE LOSING MY TOUCH. THAT SHOT SHOULD HAVE FINISHED BOTH OF YOU.
YOU GOT A NAME, KID? I'M BOOMERANG-- AN' I ALWAYS LIKE TO KNOW WHO I'M ABOUT TO KILL.
I AM CALLED SHANG CHI.
"HIS WORDS ARE BOASTFUL, HIS MANNER ARROGANT. LIKE MANY WESTERNERS, HE ASSUMES THAT BECAUSE I CARRY NO WEAPONS...
"...I AM NO THREAT TO HIM.

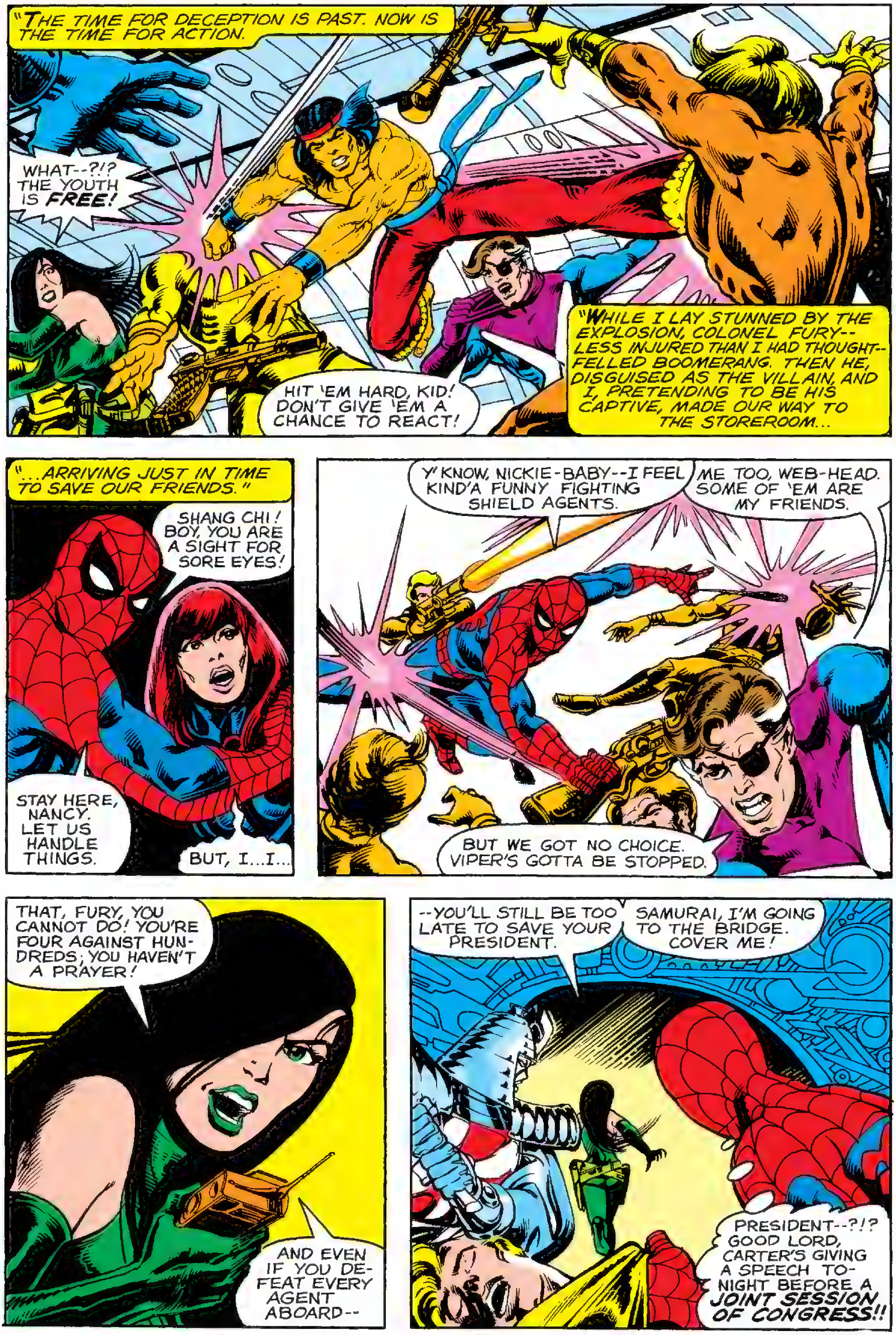

"I WAIT...
"...BUT BOOMERANG DOES NOT ATTACK.
YOU'RE ONE OF THOSE KUNG-FU HOTSHOTS, HUH, KID? NO PROBLEM. I CREAMED IRON FIST NOT LONG AGO.*
I CAN DO THE SAME TO YOU.
*A SLIGHTLY BIASED VIEW OF THE OUTCOME OF IRON FIST #13--ADJUDICATOR AL.
"IRON FIST...?
"I HAVE FOUGHT BESIDE IRON FIST IN THE PAST...*
HERE, PUNK-- CATCH A RAZOR-ANG!
"HIS MARTIAL ARTS SKILL IS VERY NEARLY THE EQUAL OF MY OWN.
KTANG!
"THAT MEANS THAT BOOMERANG--FOR ALL HIS BLUSTER--
OKAY, KID--
LET'S SEE HOW WELL YOUR FANCY MOVES HANDLE A GASARANG?!
"--IS A FOE TO BE RESPECTED.
POOF!
THAT'S NERVE GAS, CHUMP!
ONE WHIFF, AN' YOU'RE STONE, COLD DEAD!
"THE CLOUD FILLS THE AIR AROUND ME LIKE ONE OF LONDON'S LEGENDARY FOGS. I HOLD MY BREATH, BUT BEFORE I CAN MAKE A MOVE...
"...THE DECK DROPS AWAY BENEATH ME, LOWERING ME TO SAFETY.
WHAT THE--?!?
REAL SMART, PUNK-- BUT YOU AIN'T GETTING AWAY FROM ME THAT EASILY!

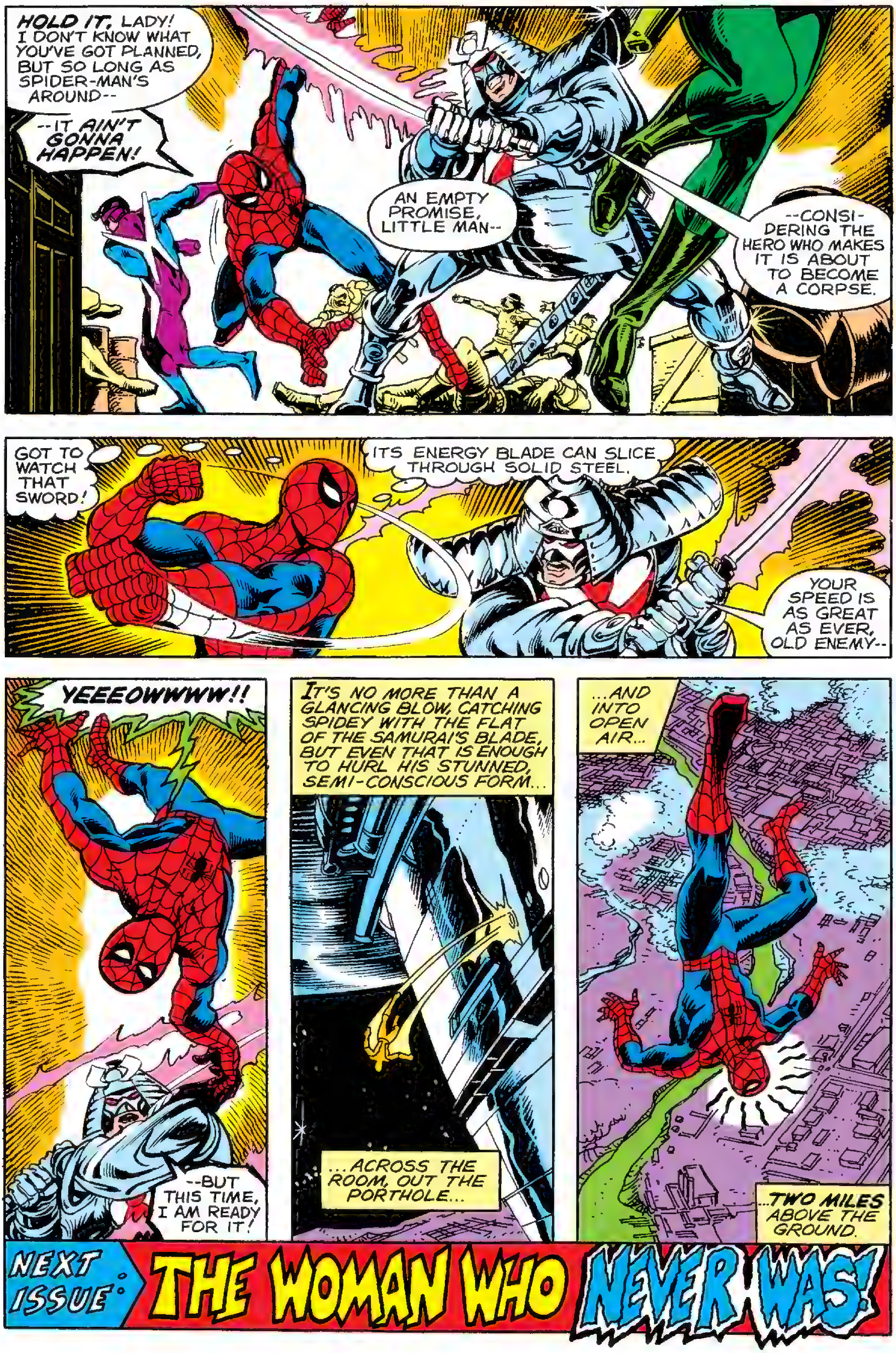

ESCAPE IS NOT MY INTENTION, BOOMERANG.
"I DO NOT KNOW WHO ACTIVATED THE ELEVATOR...
WHAM!
"...BUT WHOEVER MY MYSTERIOUS BENEFACTOR IS, HE HAS GIVEN ME AN OPPORTUNITY I DO NOT INTEND TO WASTE.
"YET, EVEN AS HE FALLS, BOOMERANG STRIKES BACK.
I'VE SURVIVED BEING HIT BY THE HULK.
YOU JUST MADE THE SAME MISTAKE IRON FIST MADE, CHUMP.
IT'LL TAKE A LOT MORE THAN ONE PUNCH TO FINISH ME!
"OUR DUEL IS BRIEF, BUT INTENSE. I AM ABLE TO AVOID MOST OF BOOMERANG'S WEAPONS...
"...AND THOSE I CANNOT DODGE...
"...I SMASH.
KRAKOW!
"THE CRAMPED QUARTERS BELOW THE SKYCRAFT'S DECK WORK TO MY ADVANTAGE. THERE IS NO ROOM FOR BOOMERANG TO FLY. AND AS THE FIGHT PROGRESSES, I WORK MY WAY CLOSER AND CLOSER TO HIM. UNTIL...

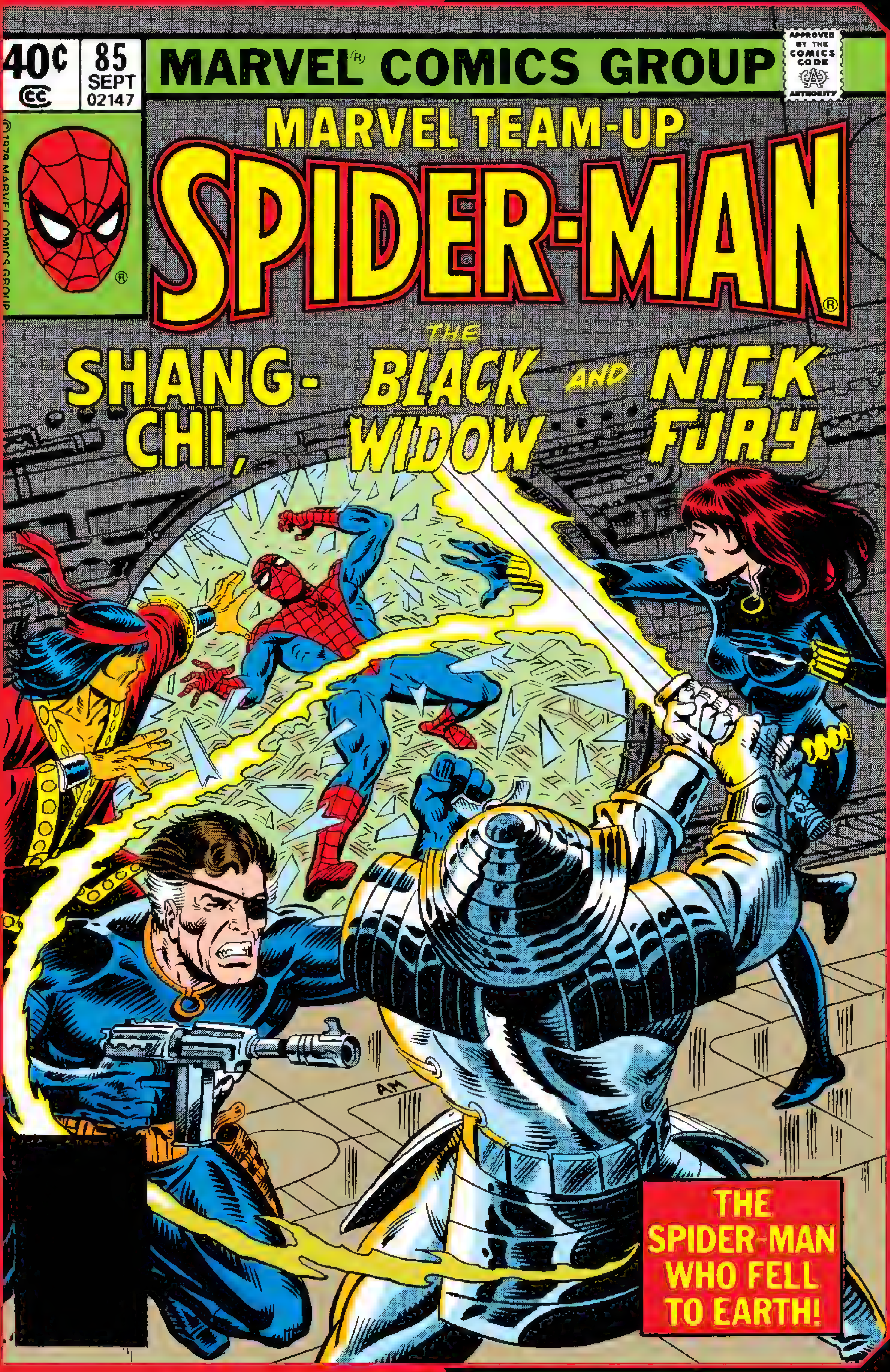

"I HAVE PLAYED MY GAMBIT WELL.
THAK!
"MY SUDDEN ATTACK CATCHES BOOMERANG OFF-BALANCE.
KAAAA--!
"MY EARLIER ESTIMATION OF HIM WAS CORRECT. THOUGH VERY STRONG AND VERY FAST--AND SUPREMELY GIFTED IN THE USE OF HIS UNIQUE WEAPONS--
CHWUD!
HAIII--!
"--BOOMERANG'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE MARTIAL ARTS IS MINIMAL.
KROM!
YAHHH!!
YOU ARE BEATEN, BOOMERANG. SURRENDER, AND SPARE YOURSELF FURTHER, UNNECESSARY PAIN.
I MAY BE DOWN, KID--
--BUT I AIN'T OUT.
NOT WHILE I'VE A BOOMERANG LEFT TO THROW!
KRAKOOM!


BOOMERANG TA- BRIDGE--SORRY FOR THE DELAY IN CALLING YOU. THE EXPLOSION MESSED UP MOST OF THE COM SYSTEMS BACK HERE.
BOTH FURY AN' HIS KUNG FU PLAYMATE HAVE BEEN TAKEN CARE OF... PERMANENTLY.
NOT FAR AWAY...
THIS IS THE PORTHOLE NICK FURY TOLD US ABOUT. LET'S GET INSIDE.
I THOUGHT I HEARD AN EXPLOSION A FEW MINUTES AGO.
I HOPE NOTHING'S GONE WRONG.
WHERE ARE WE?
A STOREROOM.
IF I REMEMBER FURY'S DIAGRAM RIGHT, WE SHOULDN'T BE THAT FAR FROM THE COMMAND DECK.
BUT--WE'RE ONLY TWO, AGAINST WHO KNOWS HOW MANY.
WHAT WE LACK IN NUMBERS, RED, WE MAKE UP FOR BY BEING REAL SNEAKY.
THE WIDOW--NANCY--SOUNDS SO UNSURE OF HERSELF. SUPPOSE WE GET IN A FIGHT, AND SHE FOLDS--?
WHOOPS! SPIDEY-SENSE--!
LIGHTS!
FREEZE, FOOLS!
SO MUCH FOR BEING SNEAKY.
UH, HI, GUYS. FANCY MEETING YOU HERE.
LISTEN, I THINK THERE'S BEEN A MISTAKE...
THAT'S RIGHT, WEB-SLINGER. AND YOU MADE IT THE MOMENT YOU AND THE WIDOW TRIED TO SNEAK ABOARD.


AN ADMIRABLE TRY, SPIDER-MAN, BUT DOOMED TO FAILURE FROM THE START. WE'VE BEEN TRACKING YOU WITH THE EXTERNAL SENSORS SINCE YOUR ARRIVAL. I COULD HAVE HAD YOU SLAIN ANY TIME...
...BUT YOU AND MS. ROMANOFF HAVE CAUSED ME A GREAT DEAL OF INCONVENIENCE IN THE PAST.
I WANTED TO BE PRESENT FOR YOUR EXECUTION.
Y-YOU--I KNOW YOU.
YOU'RE THE FIGURE FROM MY NIGHTMARES!
I TRIED... SO HARD TO FORGET... BECAUSE TO REMEMBER MEANT... MORE PAIN THAN I COULD STAND!
BUT NOW, SEEING YOU--I... DO... REMEMBER... I...
AAARGH!
THAT SCREAM--
--WHAT IN HEAVEN'S NAME DID YOU DO TO HER?!?
I ASKED QUESTIONS.
THE BLACK WIDOW REFUSED TO ANSWER.
TIME GROWS SHORT, HOWEVER, AND THERE IS MUCH TO DO BEFORE ZERO HOUR.
KILL THEM, QUARTERMAIN.
YES, MA'AM.
HOLD IT, FELLA!
I BROUGHT YOU A PRESENT, VIPER--FURY'S SURPRISE ACE IN THE HOLE. HE'S A BRUCE LEE CLONE NAMED CHANG-SHI.
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT WANT TO QUESTION HIM, LIKE YOU DID THE WIDOW.
CRETIN! I DO NOT PAY YOU TO THINK, ONLY TO DO AS YOU'RE TOLD!
YOU TRY MY PATIENCE WITH YOUR CONTINUAL BUMBLING, BOOMERANG.
PUT YOUR PRISONER WITH THE OTHERS AND KILL THEM ALL--***AT ONCE!***


"THE TIME FOR DECEPTION IS PAST. NOW IS THE TIME FOR ACTION.
WHAT--?!? THE YOUTH IS *FREE!*
HIT 'EM HARD, KID! DON'T GIVE 'EM A CHANCE TO REACT!
"WHILE I LAY STUNNED BY THE EXPLOSION, COLONEL FURY--LESS INJURED THAN I HAD THOUGHT--FELLED BOOMERANG. THEN HE, DISGUISED AS THE VILLAIN, AND I, PRETENDING TO BE HIS CAPTIVE, MADE OUR WAY TO THE STOREROOM...
"...ARRIVING JUST IN TIME TO SAVE OUR FRIENDS."
SHANG CHI! BOY, YOU ARE A SIGHT FOR SORE EYES!
STAY HERE, NANCY. LET US HANDLE THINGS.
BUT, I...I...
Y'KNOW, NICKIE-BABY--I FEEL KIND'A FUNNY FIGHTING SHIELD AGENTS.
ME TOO, WEB-HEAD. SOME OF 'EM ARE MY FRIENDS.
BUT WE GOT NO CHOICE. VIPER'S GOTTA BE STOPPED.
THAT, FURY, YOU CANNOT DO! YOU'RE FOUR AGAINST HUNDREDS; YOU HAVEN'T A PRAYER!
AND EVEN IF YOU DEFEAT EVERY AGENT ABOARD--
--YOU'LL STILL BE TOO LATE TO SAVE YOUR PRESIDENT.
SAMURAI, I'M GOING TO THE BRIDGE. COVER ME!
PRESIDENT--?!? GOOD LORD, CARTER'S GIVING A SPEECH TONIGHT BEFORE A *JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS!!*


HOLD IT, LADY! I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'VE GOT PLANNED, BUT SO LONG AS SPIDER-MAN'S AROUND--
--IT AIN'T GONNA HAPPEN!
AN EMPTY PROMISE, LITTLE MAN--
--CONSIDERING THE HERO WHO MAKES IT IS ABOUT TO BECOME A CORPSE.
GOT TO WATCH THAT SWORD!
ITS ENERGY BLADE CAN SLICE THROUGH SOLID STEEL.
YOUR SPEED IS AS GREAT AS EVER, OLD ENEMY--
YEEEOWWWW!!
--BUT THIS TIME, I AM READY FOR IT!
IT'S NO MORE THAN A GLANCING BLOW, CATCHING SPIDEY WITH THE FLAT OF THE SAMURAI'S BLADE, BUT EVEN THAT IS ENOUGH TO HURL HIS STUNNED, SEMI-CONSCIOUS FORM...
...ACROSS THE ROOM, OUT THE PORTHOLE...
...AND INTO OPEN AIR...
...TWO MILES ABOVE THE GROUND.
NEXT ISSUE: THE WOMAN WHO NEVER WAS!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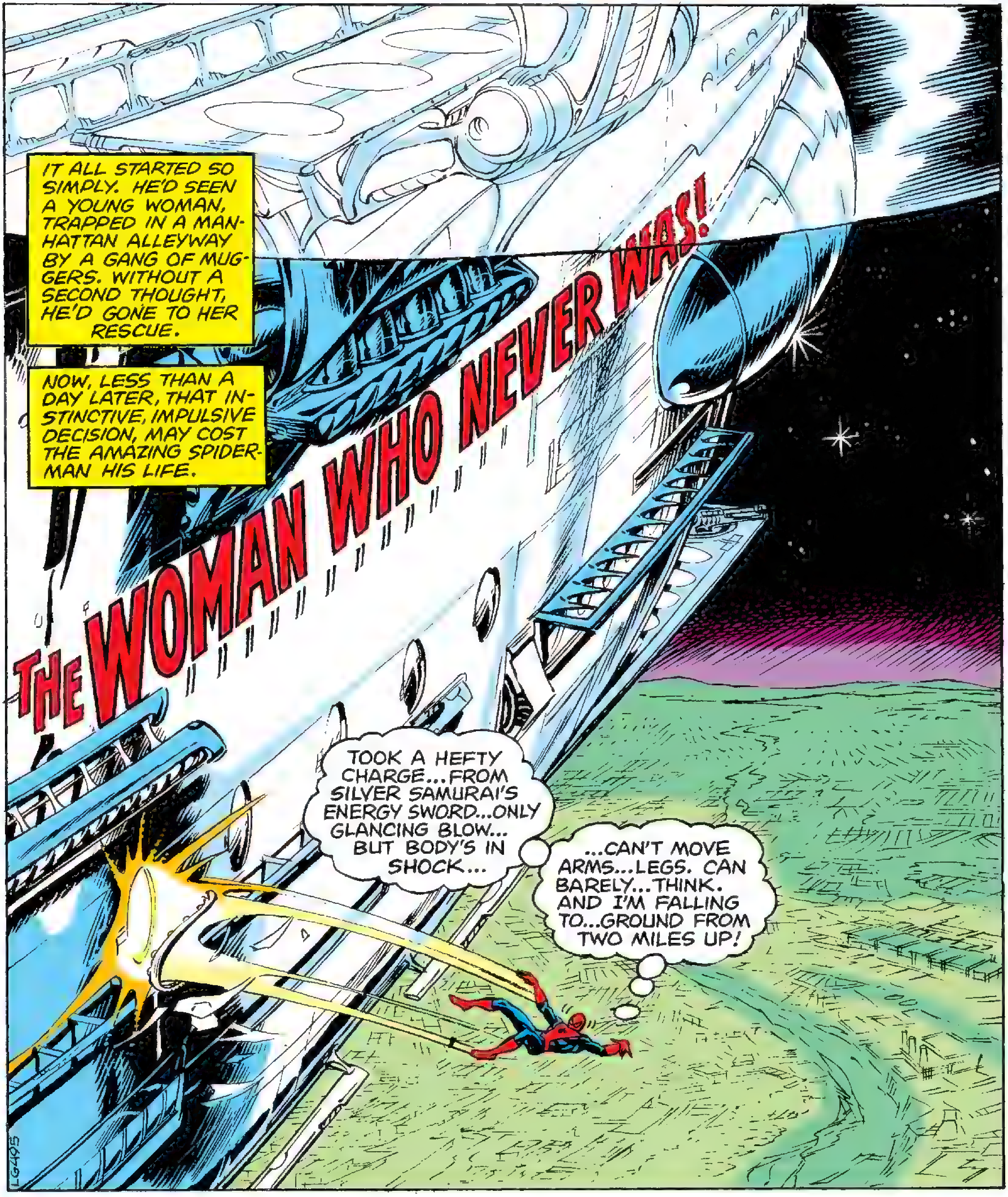
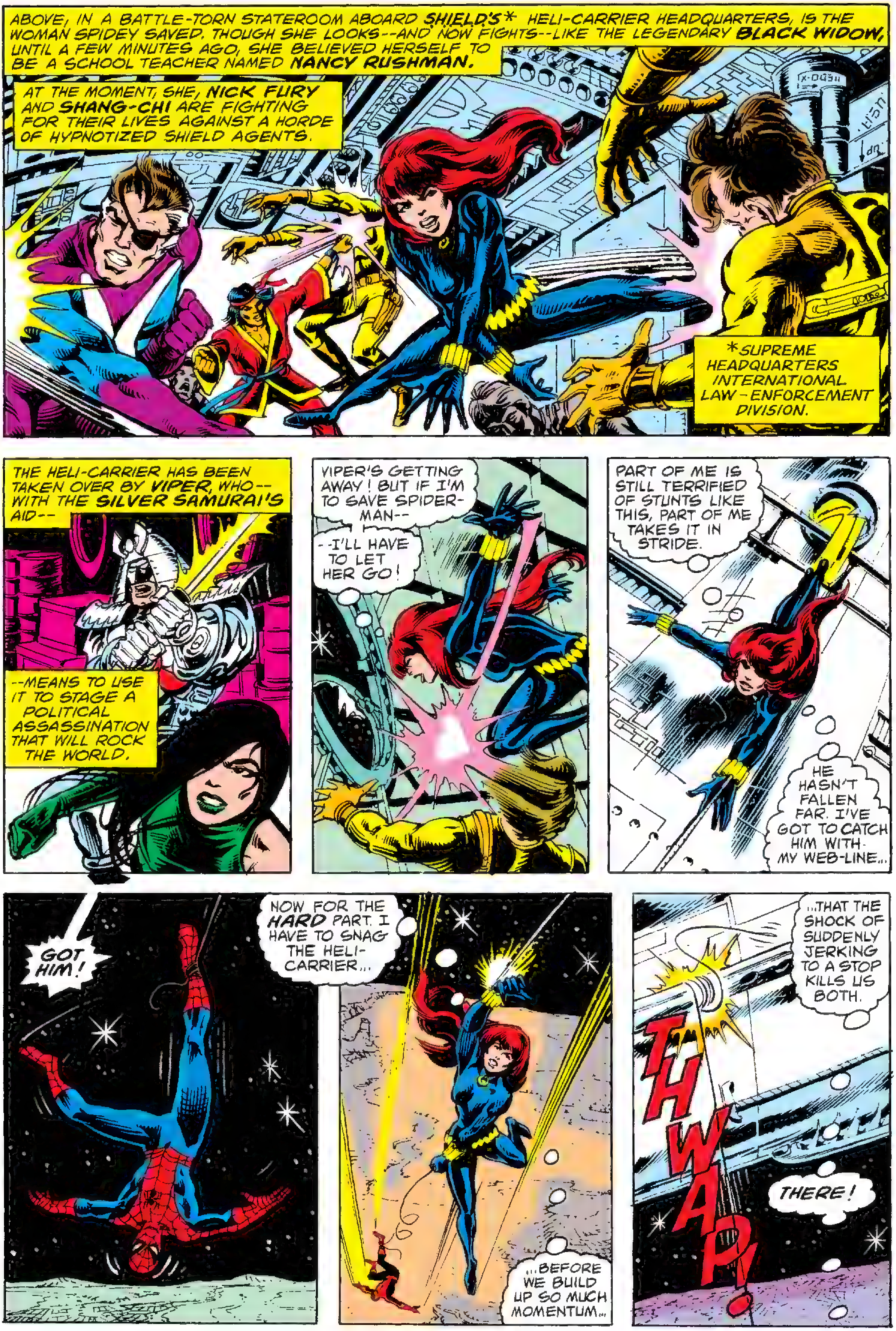
MARVEL TEAM-UP
SPIDER-MAN
SHANG-CHI,
THE BLACK WIDOW
AND
NICK FURY
AM
THE SPIDER-MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH!

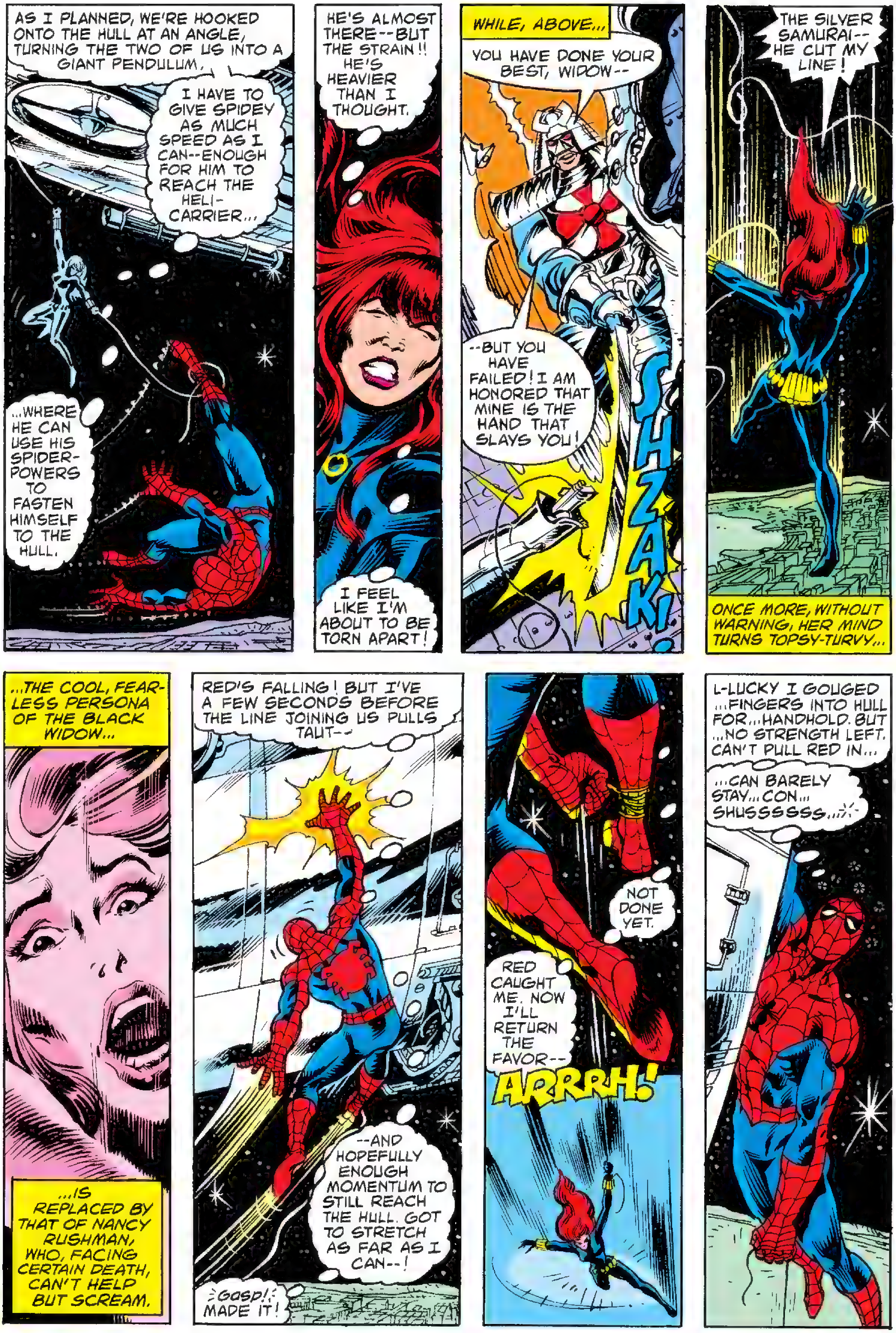
STAN LEE PRESENTS: **SPIDER-MAN®, *The* BLACK WIDOW,™ SHANG-CHI™ & NICK FURY™**

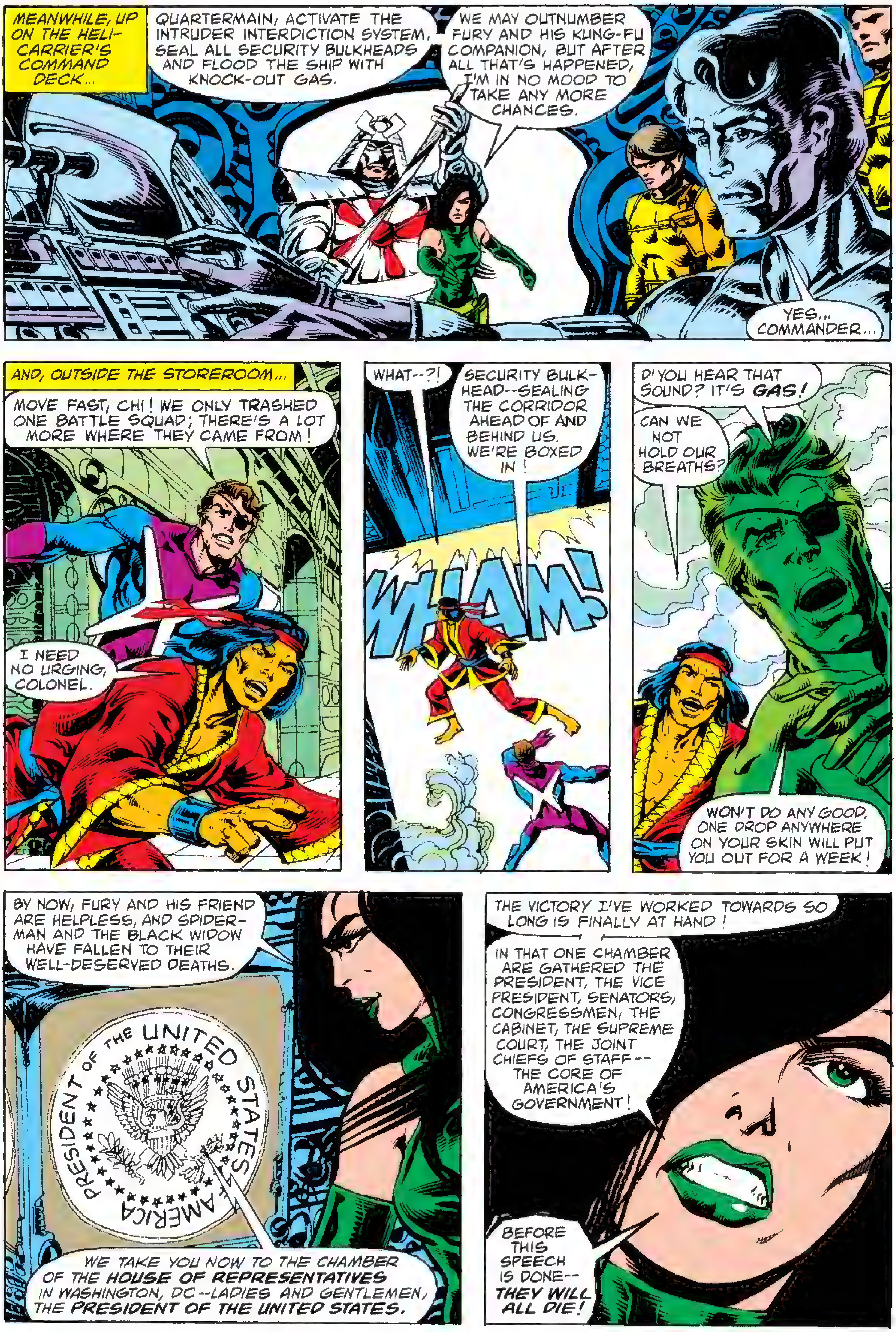
CHRIS CLAREMONT, WRITER • SAL BUSCEMA & STEVE LEIALOHA, ARTISTS • CLEM ROBINS – LETTERER, BEN SEAN – COLORIST • ALLEN MILGROM, EDITOR • JIM SHOOTER, ED.-IN-CHIEF

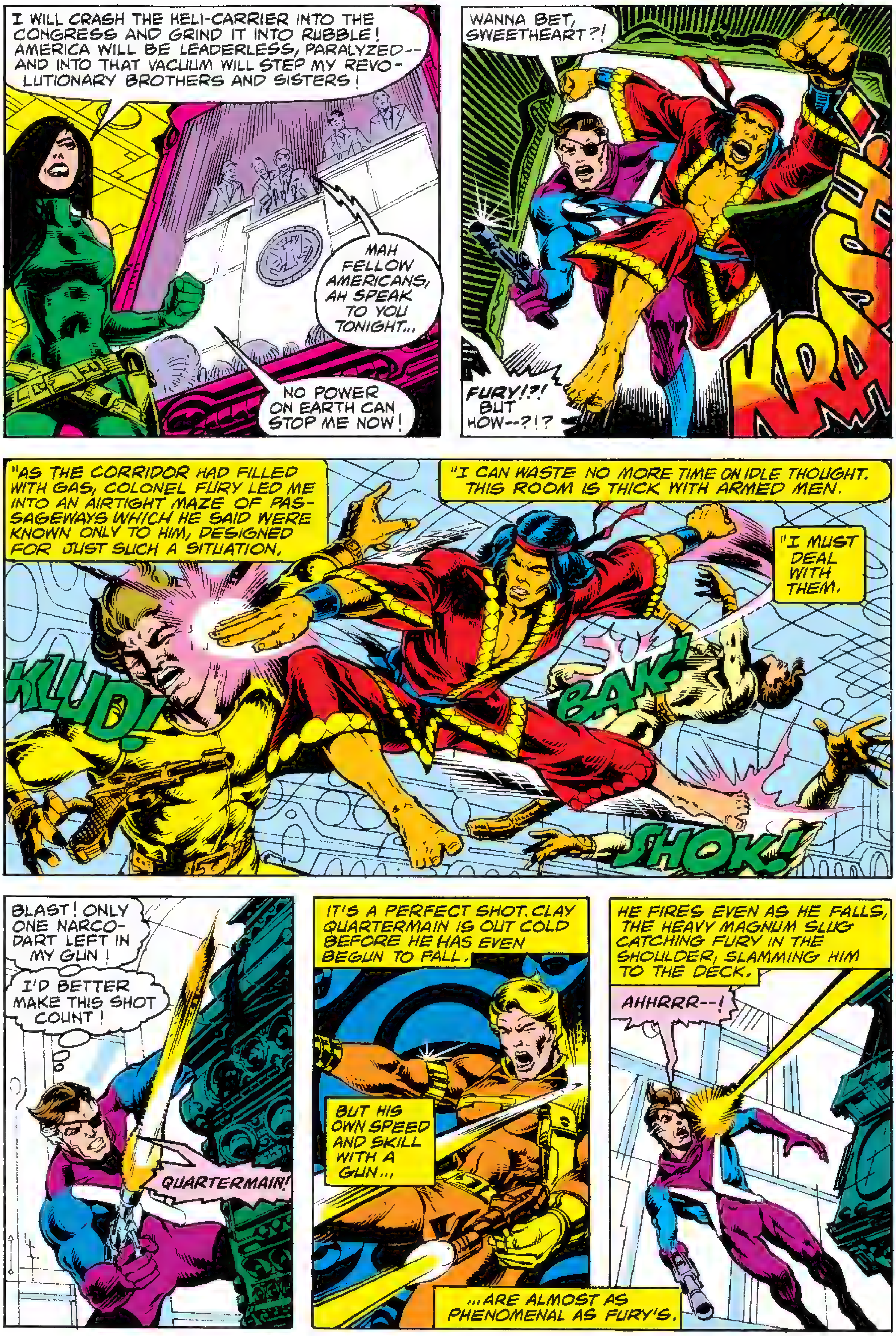
THE WOMAN WHO NEVER WAS!

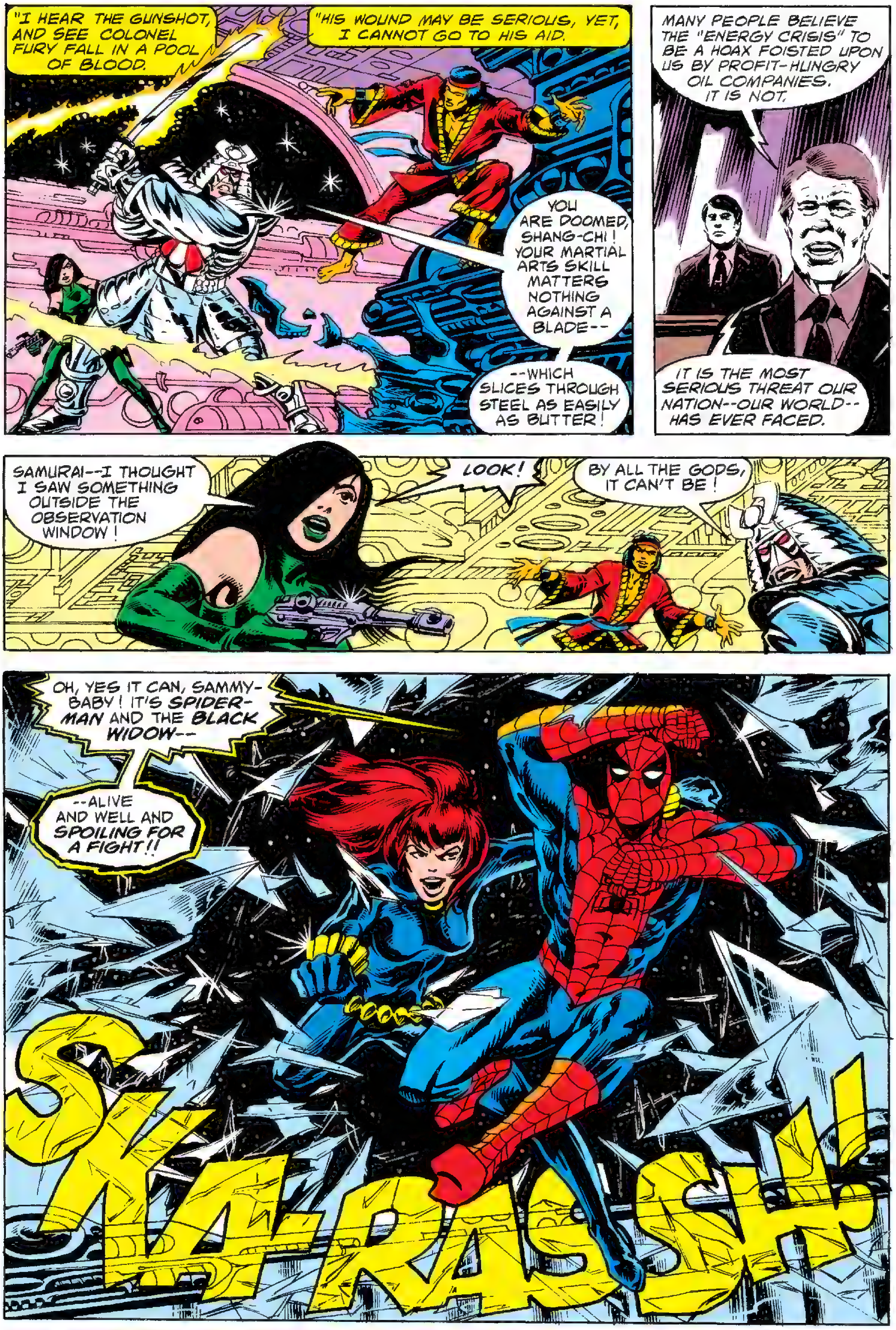

IT ALL STARTED SO SIMPLY. HE'D SEEN A YOUNG WOMAN, TRAPPED IN A MANHATTAN ALLEYWAY BY A GANG OF MUGGERS. WITHOUT A SECOND THOUGHT, HE'D GONE TO HER RESCUE.
NOW, LESS THAN A DAY LATER, THAT INSTINCTIVE, IMPULSIVE DECISION, MAY COST THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN HIS LIFE.
TOOK A HEFTY CHARGE...FROM SILVER SAMURAI'S ENERGY SWORD...ONLY GLANCING BLOW... BUT BODY'S IN SHOCK...
...CAN'T MOVE ARMS...LEGS. CAN BARELY...THINK. AND I'M FALLING TO...GROUND FROM TWO MILES UP!
LG495

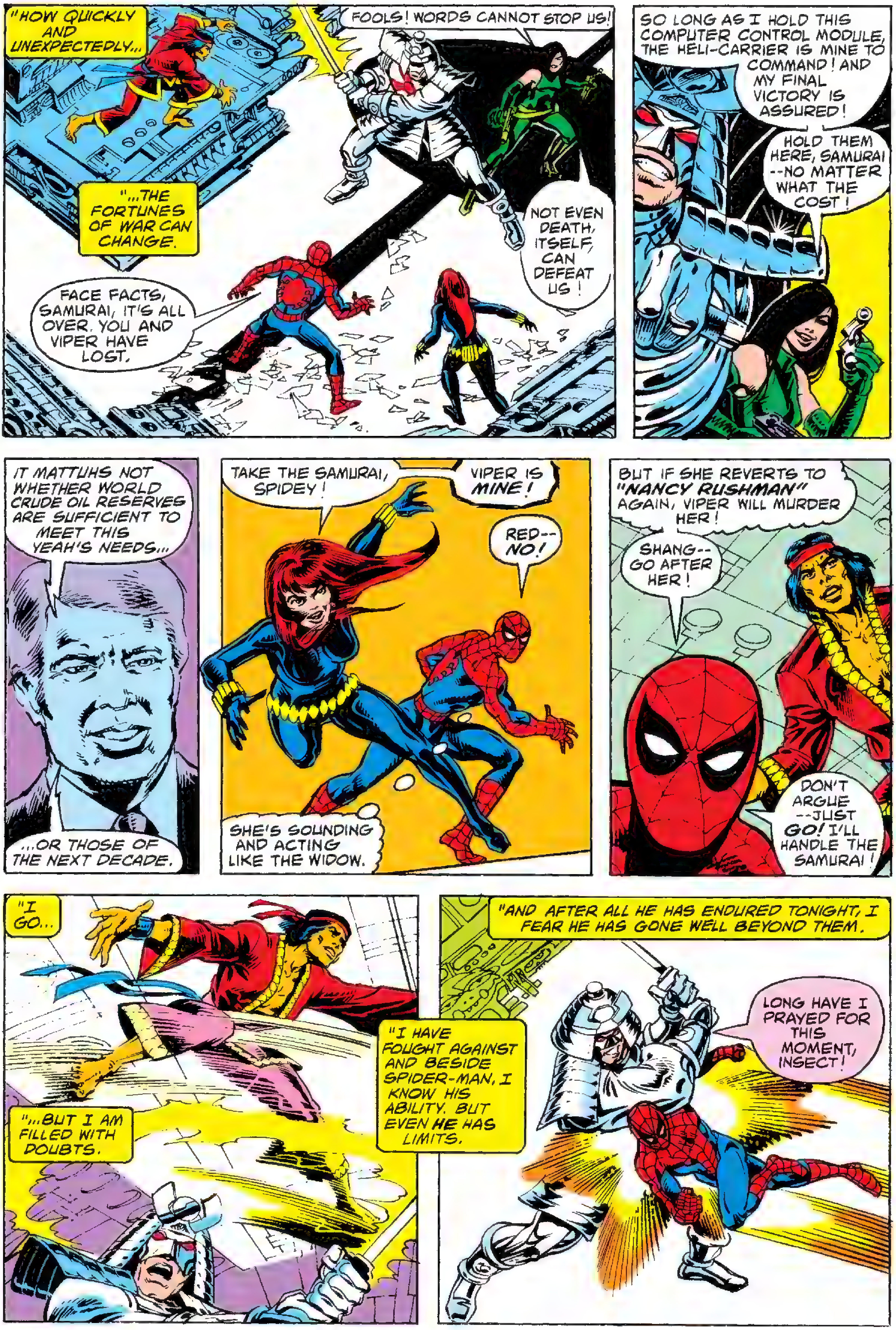

ABOVE, IN A BATTLE-TORN STATEROOM ABOARD **SHIELD'S*** HELI-CARRIER HEADQUARTERS, IS THE WOMAN SPIDEY SAVED. THOUGH SHE LOOKS--AND NOW FIGHTS--LIKE THE LEGENDARY **BLACK WIDOW**, UNTIL A FEW MINUTES AGO, SHE BELIEVED HERSELF TO BE A SCHOOL TEACHER NAMED **NANCY RUSHMAN.**
AT THE MOMENT, SHE, **NICK FURY** AND **SHANG-CHI** ARE FIGHTING FOR THEIR LIVES AGAINST A HORDE OF HYPNOTIZED SHIELD AGENTS.
*SUPREME HEADQUARTERS INTERNATIONAL LAW-ENFORCEMENT DIVISION.
THE HELI-CARRIER HAS BEEN TAKEN OVER BY **VIPER**, WHO--WITH THE **SILVER SAMURAI'S** AID--
--MEANS TO USE IT TO STAGE A POLITICAL ASSASSINATION THAT WILL ROCK THE WORLD.
VIPER'S GETTING AWAY! BUT IF I'M TO SAVE SPIDER-MAN--
--I'LL HAVE TO LET HER GO!
PART OF ME IS STILL TERRIFIED OF STUNTS LIKE THIS, PART OF ME TAKES IT IN STRIDE.
HE HASN'T FALLEN FAR. I'VE GOT TO CATCH HIM WITH MY WEB-LINE...
GOT HIM!
NOW FOR THE **HARD** PART. I HAVE TO SNAG THE HELI-CARRIER...
...BEFORE WE BUILD UP SO MUCH MOMENTUM...
...THAT THE SHOCK OF SUDDENLY JERKING TO A STOP KILLS US BOTH.
THWAP!
THERE!

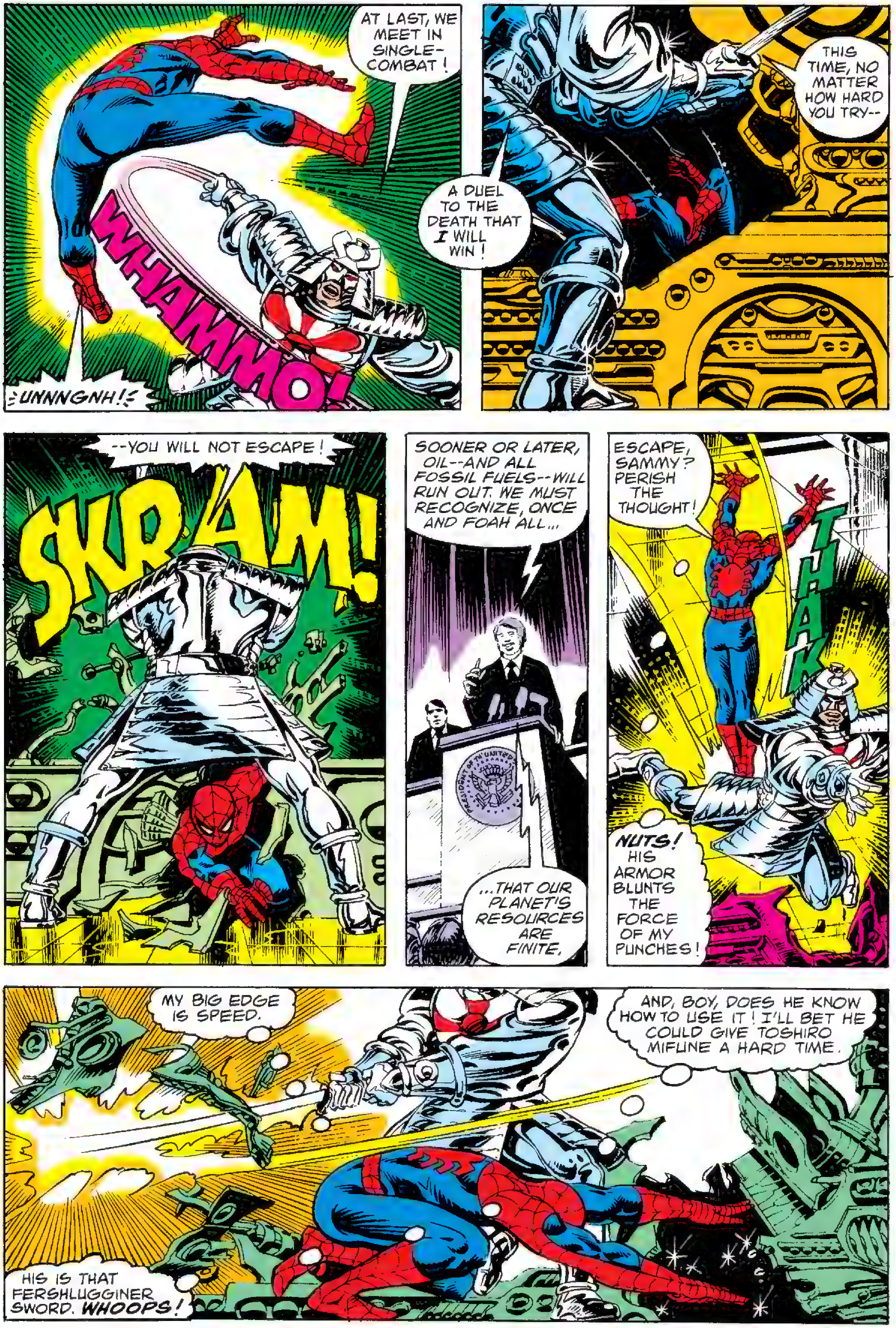

AS I PLANNED, WE'RE HOOKED ONTO THE HULL AT AN ANGLE, TURNING THE TWO OF US INTO A GIANT PENDULUM.
I HAVE TO GIVE SPIDEY AS MUCH SPEED AS I CAN--ENOUGH FOR HIM TO REACH THE HELI-CARRIER...
...WHERE HE CAN USE HIS SPIDER-POWERS TO FASTEN HIMSELF TO THE HULL.
HE'S ALMOST THERE--BUT THE STRAIN!! HE'S HEAVIER THAN I THOUGHT.
I FEEL LIKE I'M ABOUT TO BE TORN APART!
WHILE, ABOVE...
YOU HAVE DONE YOUR BEST, WIDOW--
--BUT YOU HAVE FAILED! I AM HONORED THAT MINE IS THE HAND THAT SLAYS YOU!
SHZAK!
THE SILVER SAMURAI--HE CUT MY LINE!
ONCE MORE, WITHOUT WARNING, HER MIND TURNS TOPSY-TURVY...
...THE COOL, FEARLESS PERSONA OF THE BLACK WIDOW...
...IS REPLACED BY THAT OF NANCY RUSHMAN, WHO, FACING CERTAIN DEATH, CAN'T HELP BUT SCREAM.
RED'S FALLING! BUT I'VE A FEW SECONDS BEFORE THE LINE JOINING US PULLS TAUT--
--AND HOPEFULLY ENOUGH MOMENTUM TO STILL REACH THE HULL. GOT TO STRETCH AS FAR AS I CAN--!
Gasp! MADE IT!
NOT DONE YET.
RED CAUGHT ME. NOW I'LL RETURN THE FAVOR--
ARRRH!
L-LUCKY I GOUGED ...FINGERS INTO HULL FOR...HANDHOLD. BUT ...NO STRENGTH LEFT. CAN'T PULL RED IN...
...CAN BARELY STAY...CON... SHUSSSSSS...

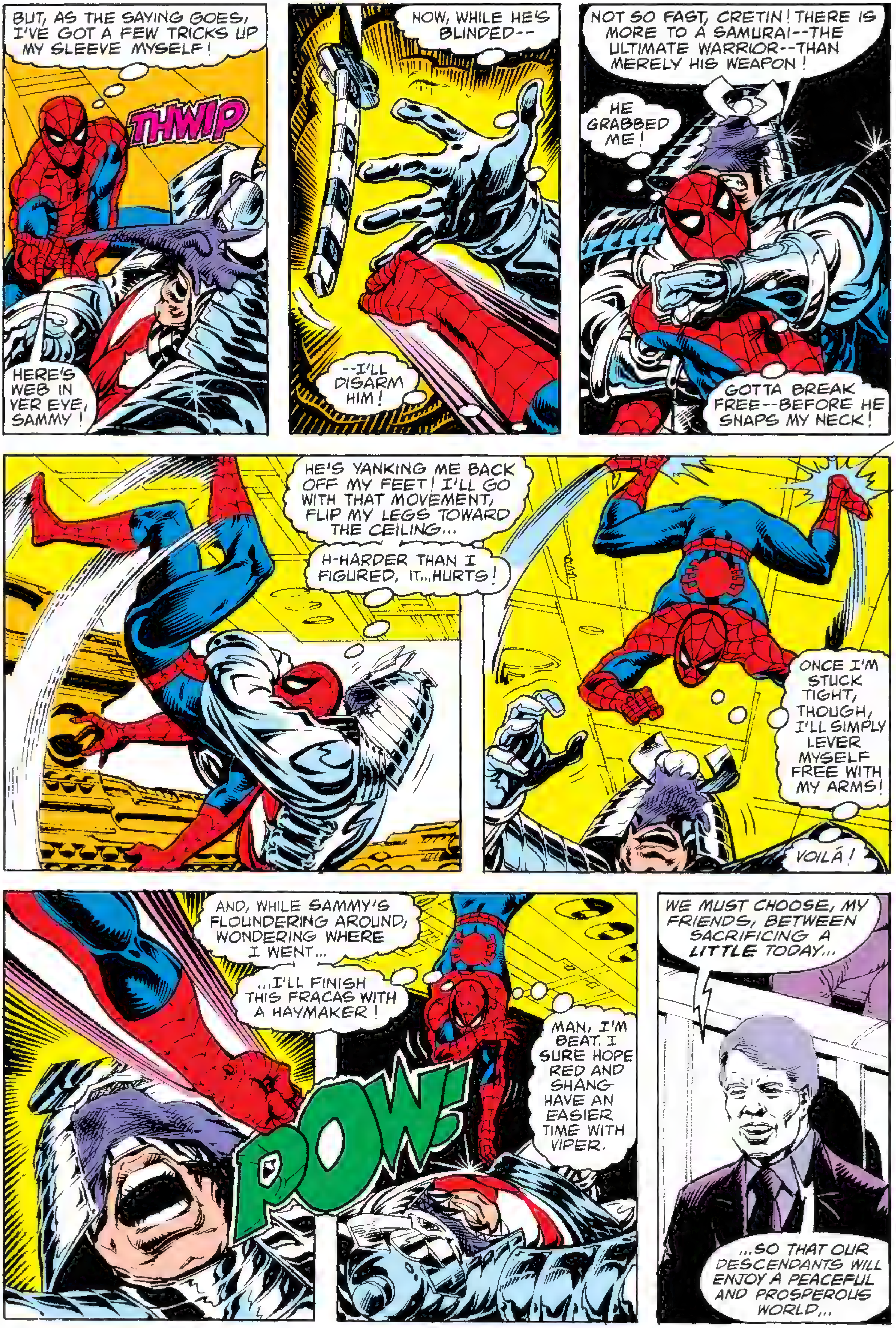

MEANWHILE, UP ON THE HELI-CARRIER'S COMMAND DECK...
QUARTERMAIN, ACTIVATE THE INTRUDER INTERDICTION SYSTEM, SEAL ALL SECURITY BULKHEADS AND FLOOD THE SHIP WITH KNOCK-OUT GAS.
WE MAY OUTNUMBER FURY AND HIS KUNG-FU COMPANION, BUT AFTER ALL THAT'S HAPPENED, I'M IN NO MOOD TO TAKE ANY MORE CHANCES.
YES... COMMANDER...
AND, OUTSIDE THE STOREROOM...
MOVE FAST, CHI! WE ONLY TRASHED ONE BATTLE SQUAD; THERE'S A LOT MORE WHERE THEY CAME FROM!
I NEED NO URGING, COLONEL.
WHAT--?!
SECURITY BULKHEAD--SEALING THE CORRIDOR AHEAD OF AND BEHIND US. WE'RE BOXED IN!
WHAM!
D'YOU HEAR THAT SOUND? IT'S GAS!
CAN WE NOT HOLD OUR BREATHS?
WON'T DO ANY GOOD. ONE DROP ANYWHERE ON YOUR SKIN WILL PUT YOU OUT FOR A WEEK!
BY NOW, FURY AND HIS FRIEND ARE HELPLESS, AND SPIDER-MAN AND THE BLACK WIDOW HAVE FALLEN TO THEIR WELL-DESERVED DEATHS.
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AMERICA
WE TAKE YOU NOW TO THE CHAMBER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IN WASHINGTON, DC--LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.
THE VICTORY I'VE WORKED TOWARDS SO LONG IS FINALLY AT HAND!
IN THAT ONE CHAMBER ARE GATHERED THE PRESIDENT, THE VICE PRESIDENT, SENATORS, CONGRESSMEN, THE CABINET, THE SUPREME COURT, THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF-- THE CORE OF AMERICA'S GOVERNMENT!
BEFORE THIS SPEECH IS DONE-- THEY WILL ALL DIE!

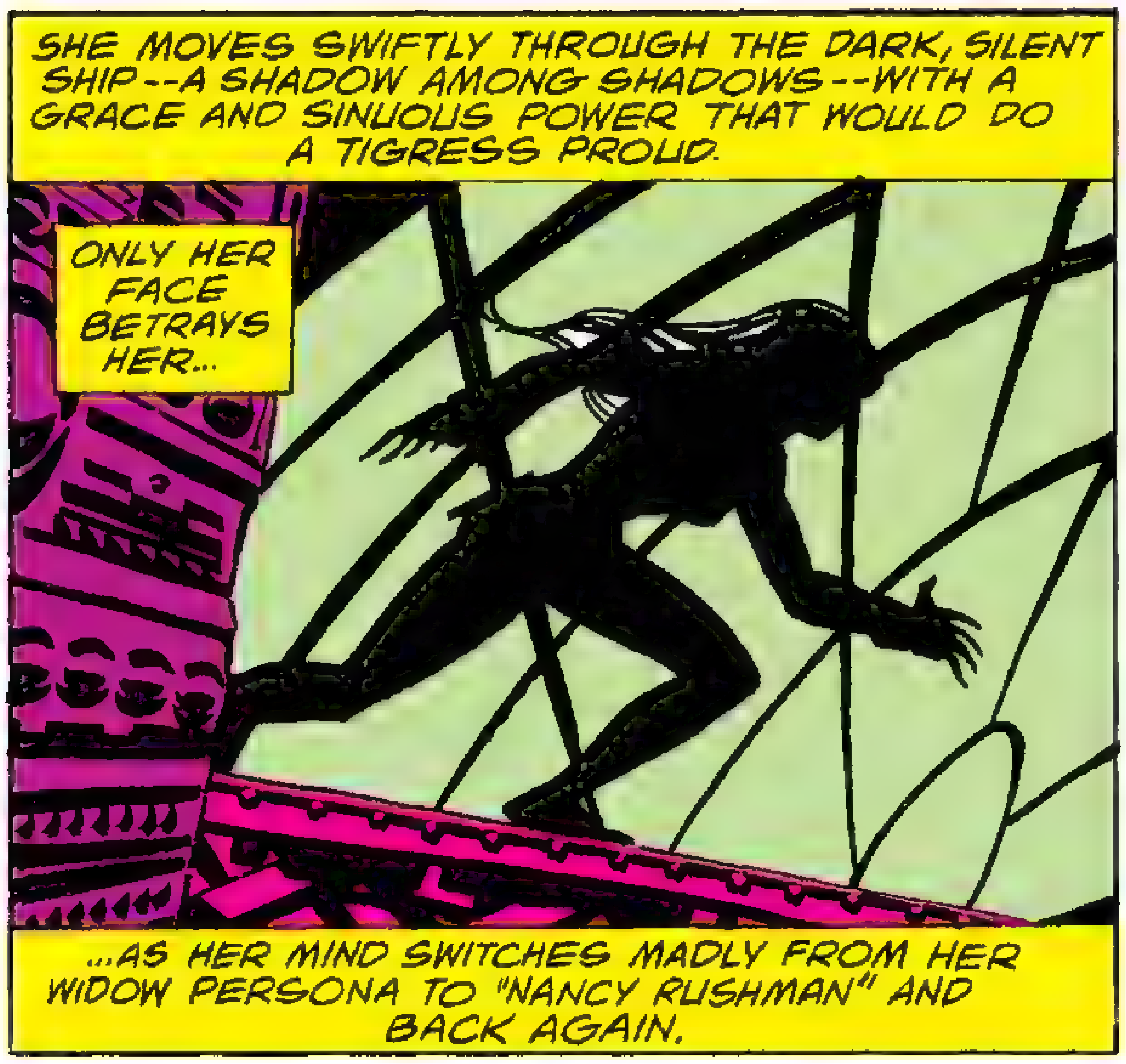

I WILL CRASH THE HELI-CARRIER INTO THE CONGRESS AND GRIND IT INTO RUBBLE! AMERICA WILL BE LEADERLESS, PARALYZED-- AND INTO THAT VACUUM WILL STEP MY REVOLUTIONARY BROTHERS AND SISTERS!
MAH FELLOW AMERICANS, AH SPEAK TO YOU TONIGHT...
NO POWER ON EARTH CAN STOP ME NOW!
WANNA BET, SWEETHEART?!
FURY!?! BUT HOW--?!?
KRA
"AS THE CORRIDOR HAD FILLED WITH GAS, COLONEL FURY LED ME INTO AN AIRTIGHT MAZE OF PASSAGEWAYS WHICH HE SAID WERE KNOWN ONLY TO HIM, DESIGNED FOR JUST SUCH A SITUATION.
"I CAN WASTE NO MORE TIME ON IDLE THOUGHT. THIS ROOM IS THICK WITH ARMED MEN.
"I MUST DEAL WITH THEM.
KLUD!
BAK!
SHOK!
BLAST! ONLY ONE NARCO-DART LEFT IN MY GUN!
I'D BETTER MAKE THIS SHOT COUNT!
QUARTERMAIN!
IT'S A PERFECT SHOT. CLAY QUARTERMAIN IS OUT COLD BEFORE HE HAS EVEN BEGUN TO FALL.
BUT HIS OWN SPEED AND SKILL WITH A GUN...
...ARE ALMOST AS PHENOMENAL AS FURY'S.
HE FIRES EVEN AS HE FALLS, THE HEAVY MAGNUM SLUG CATCHING FURY IN THE SHOULDER, SLAMMING HIM TO THE DECK.
AHHRRR--!

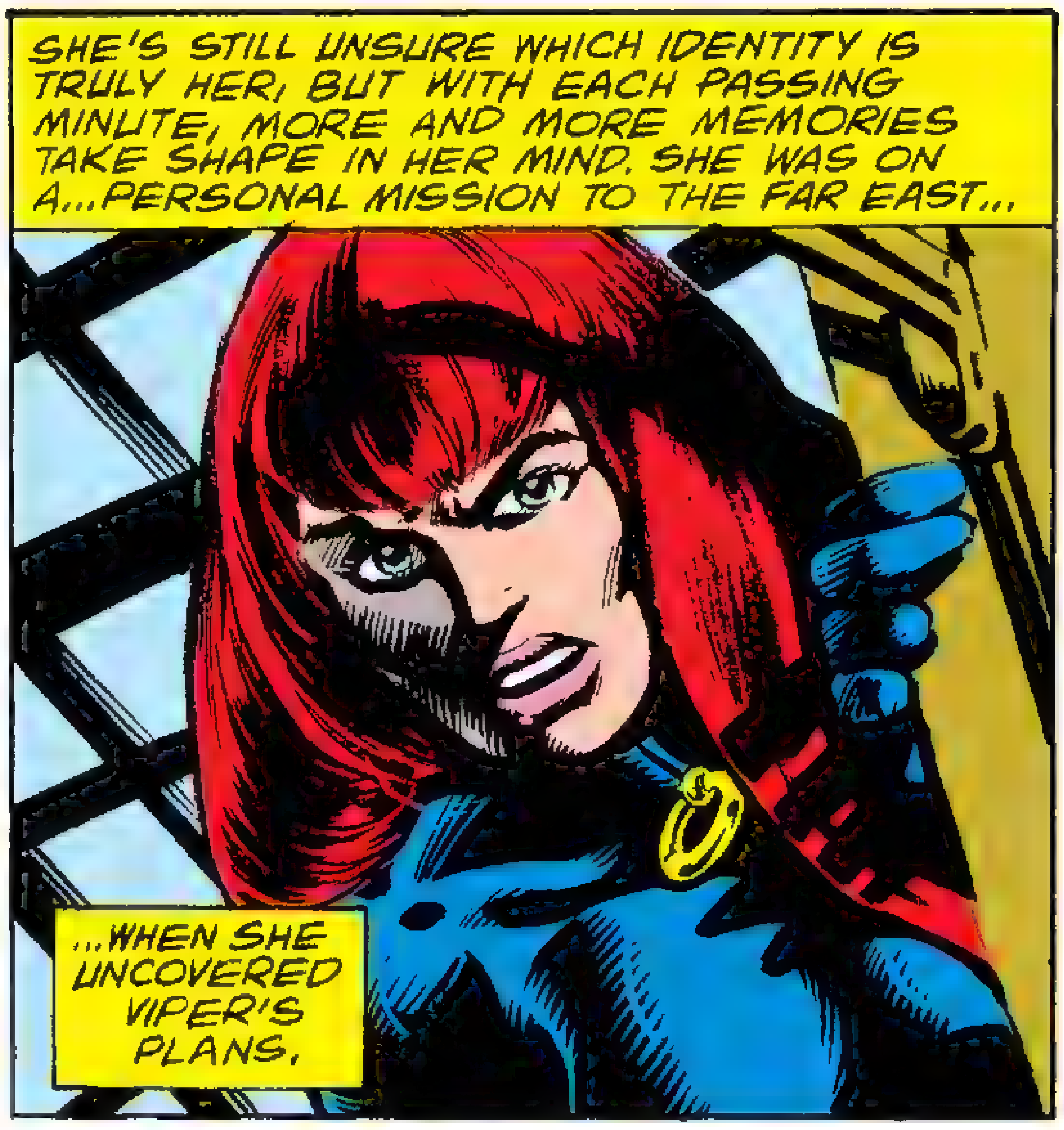

"I HEAR THE GUNSHOT, AND SEE COLONEL FURY FALL IN A POOL OF BLOOD.
"HIS WOUND MAY BE SERIOUS, YET, I CANNOT GO TO HIS AID.
YOU ARE DOOMED, SHANG-CHI! YOUR MARTIAL ARTS SKILL MATTERS NOTHING AGAINST A BLADE--
--WHICH SLICES THROUGH STEEL AS EASILY AS BUTTER!
MANY PEOPLE BELIEVE THE "ENERGY CRISIS" TO BE A HOAX FOISTED UPON US BY PROFIT-HUNGRY OIL COMPANIES. IT IS NOT.
IT IS THE MOST SERIOUS THREAT OUR NATION--OUR WORLD--HAS EVER FACED.
SAMURAI--I THOUGHT I SAW SOMETHING OUTSIDE THE OBSERVATION WINDOW!
LOOK!
BY ALL THE GODS, IT CAN'T BE!
OH, YES IT CAN, SAMMY-BABY! IT'S SPIDER-MAN AND THE BLACK WIDOW--
--ALIVE AND WELL AND SPOILING FOR A FIGHT!!
SKA-RASSH!

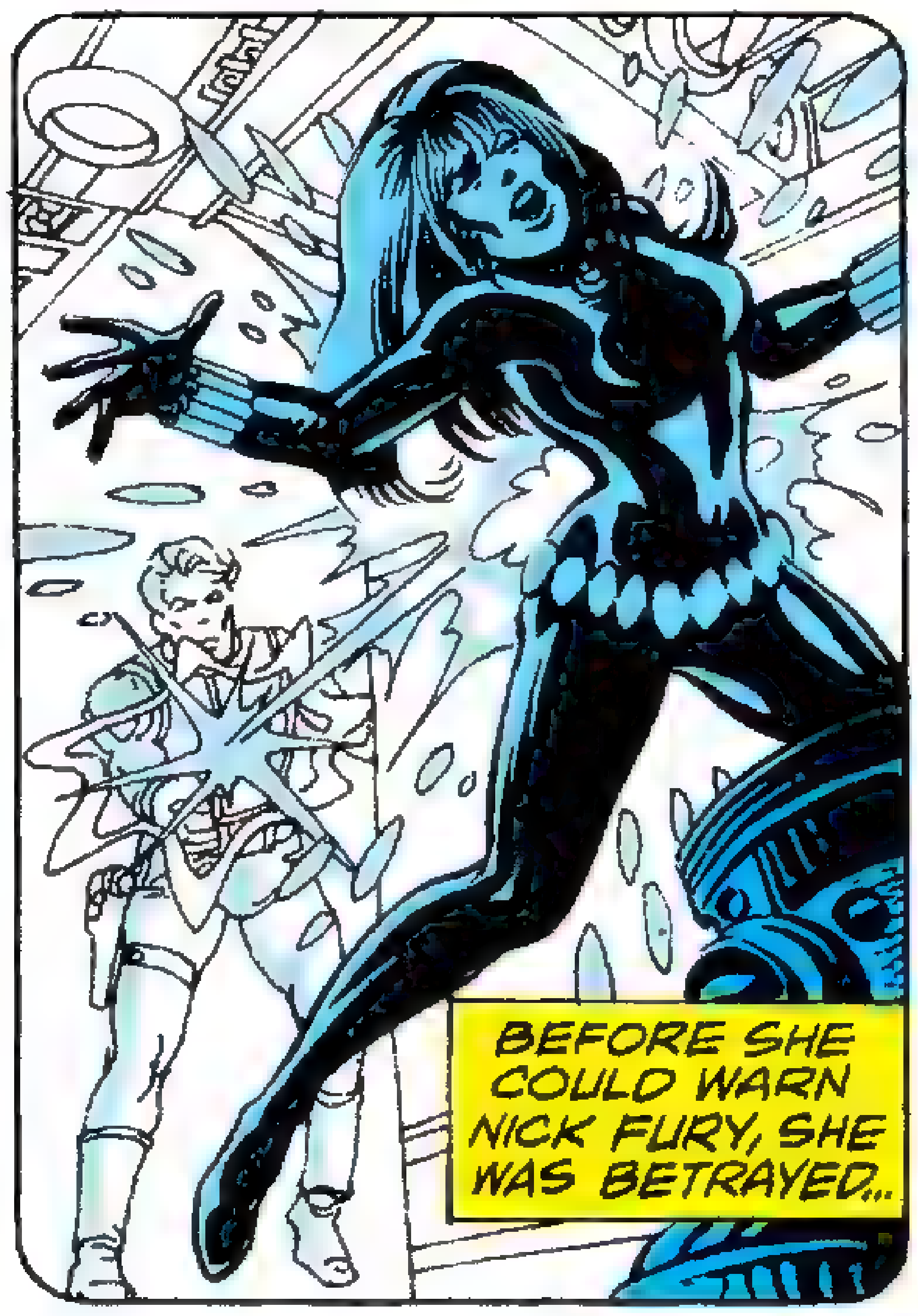

"HOW QUICKLY AND UNEXPECTEDLY...
"...THE FORTUNES OF WAR CAN CHANGE.
FACE FACTS, SAMURAI, IT'S ALL OVER. YOU AND VIPER HAVE LOST.
FOOLS! WORDS CANNOT STOP US!
NOT EVEN DEATH, ITSELF, CAN DEFEAT US!
SO LONG AS I HOLD THIS COMPUTER CONTROL MODULE, THE HELI-CARRIER IS MINE TO COMMAND! AND MY FINAL VICTORY IS ASSURED!
HOLD THEM HERE, SAMURAI --NO MATTER WHAT THE COST!
IT MATTUHS NOT WHETHER WORLD CRUDE OIL RESERVES ARE SUFFICIENT TO MEET THIS YEAH'S NEEDS...
...OR THOSE OF THE NEXT DECADE.
TAKE THE SAMURAI, SPIDEY!
VIPER IS *MINE!*
RED-- *NO!*
SHE'S SOUNDING AND ACTING LIKE THE WIDOW.
BUT IF SHE REVERTS TO ***"NANCY RUSHMAN"*** AGAIN, VIPER WILL MURDER HER!
SHANG-- GO AFTER HER!
DON'T ARGUE --JUST *GO!* I'LL HANDLE THE SAMURAI!
"I GO...
"...BUT I AM FILLED WITH DOUBTS.
"I HAVE FOUGHT AGAINST AND BESIDE SPIDER-MAN, I KNOW HIS ABILITY. BUT EVEN *HE* HAS LIMITS.
"AND AFTER ALL HE HAS ENDURED TONIGHT, I FEAR HE HAS GONE WELL BEYOND THEM.
LONG HAVE I PRAYED FOR THIS MOMENT, INSECT!

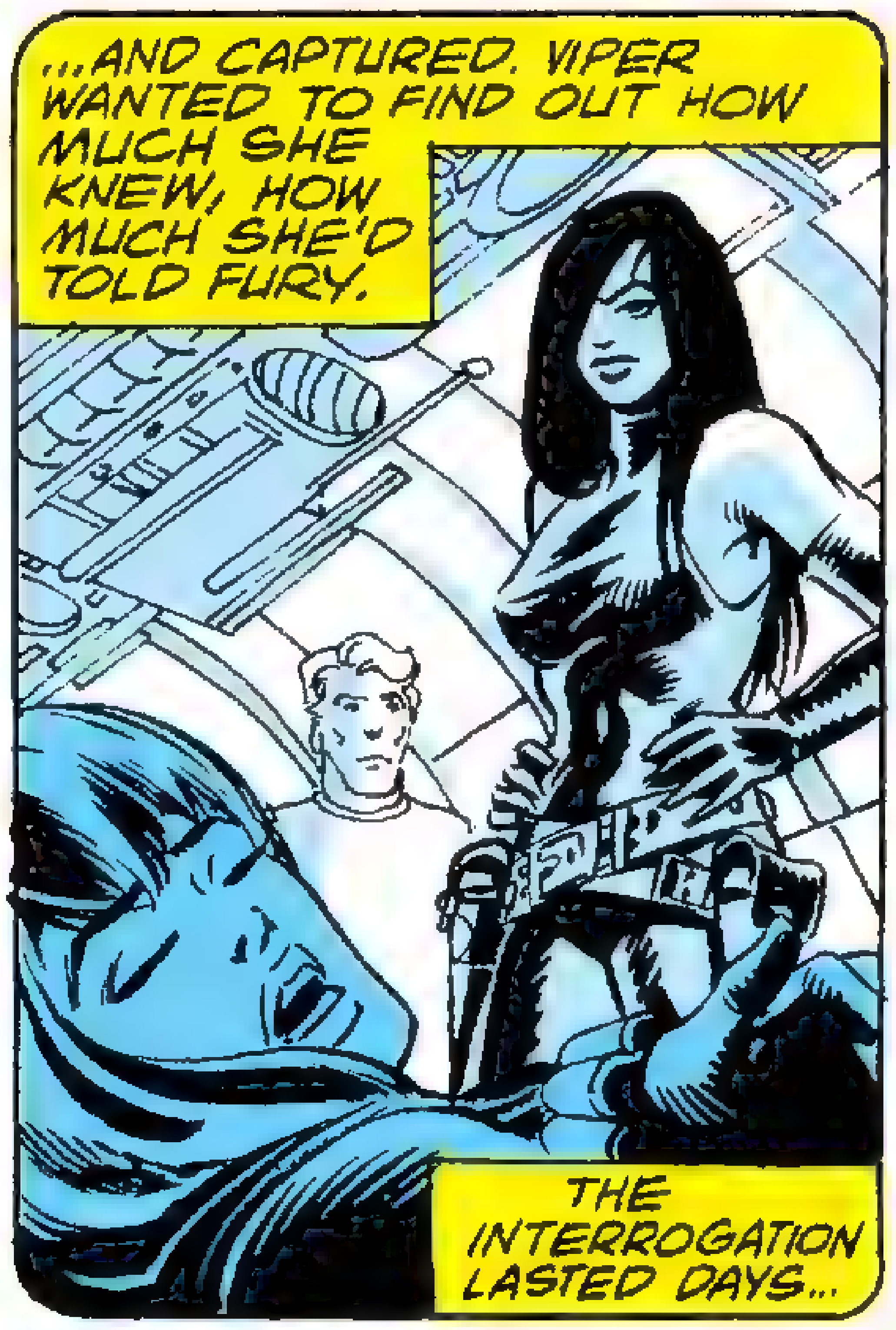

AT LAST, WE MEET IN SINGLE-COMBAT!
WHAMMO!
UNNNGNH!
THIS TIME, NO MATTER HOW HARD YOU TRY--
A DUEL TO THE DEATH THAT *I* WILL WIN!
--YOU WILL NOT ESCAPE!
SKRAM!
SOONER OR LATER, OIL--AND ALL FOSSIL FUELS--WILL RUN OUT. WE MUST RECOGNIZE, ONCE AND FOAH ALL...
...THAT OUR PLANET'S RESOURCES ARE FINITE.
ESCAPE, SAMMY? PERISH THE THOUGHT!
THAK
NUTS! HIS ARMOR BLUNTS THE FORCE OF MY PUNCHES!
MY BIG EDGE IS SPEED.
AND, BOY, DOES HE KNOW HOW TO USE IT! I'LL BET HE COULD GIVE TOSHIRO MIFUNE A HARD TIME.
HIS IS THAT FERSHLUGGINER SWORD. **WHOOPS!**

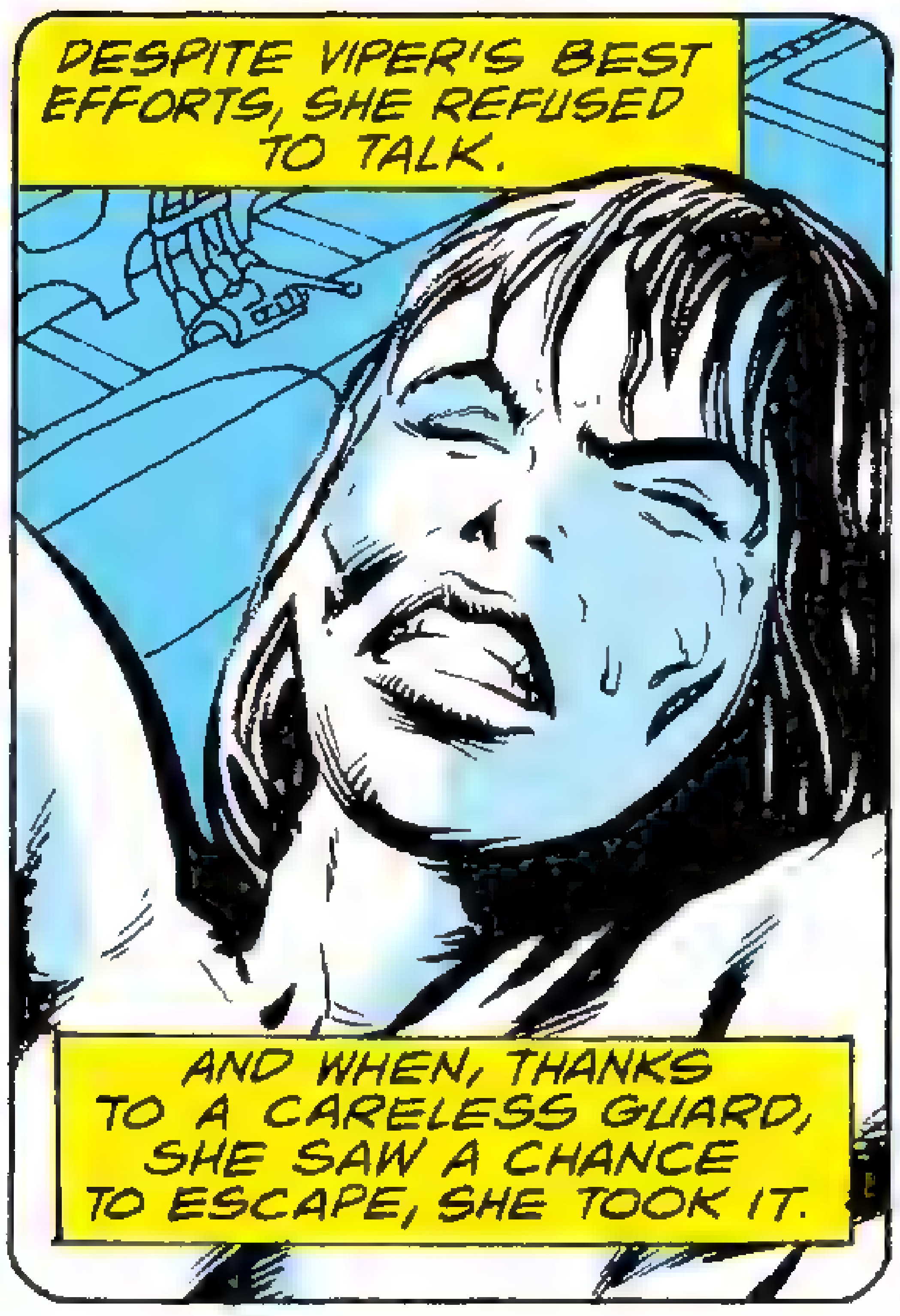

BUT, AS THE SAYING GOES, I'VE GOT A FEW TRICKS UP MY SLEEVE MYSELF!
THWIP
HERE'S WEB IN YER EYE, SAMMY!
NOW, WHILE HE'S BLINDED--
--I'LL DISARM HIM!
NOT SO FAST, CRETIN! THERE IS MORE TO A SAMURAI--THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR--THAN MERELY HIS WEAPON!
HE GRABBED ME!
GOTTA BREAK FREE--BEFORE HE SNAPS MY NECK!
HE'S YANKING ME BACK OFF MY FEET! I'LL GO WITH THAT MOVEMENT, FLIP MY LEGS TOWARD THE CEILING...
H-HARDER THAN I FIGURED, IT...HURTS!
ONCE I'M STUCK TIGHT, THOUGH, I'LL SIMPLY LEVER MYSELF FREE WITH MY ARMS!
VOILÀ!
AND, WHILE SAMMY'S FLOUNDERING AROUND, WONDERING WHERE I WENT...
...I'LL FINISH THIS FRACAS WITH A HAYMAKER!
POW!
MAN, I'M BEAT. I SURE HOPE RED AND SHANG HAVE AN EASIER TIME WITH VIPER.
WE MUST CHOOSE, MY FRIENDS, BETWEEN SACRIFICING A LITTLE TODAY...
...SO THAT OUR DESCENDANTS WILL ENJOY A PEACEFUL AND PROSPEROUS WORLD...

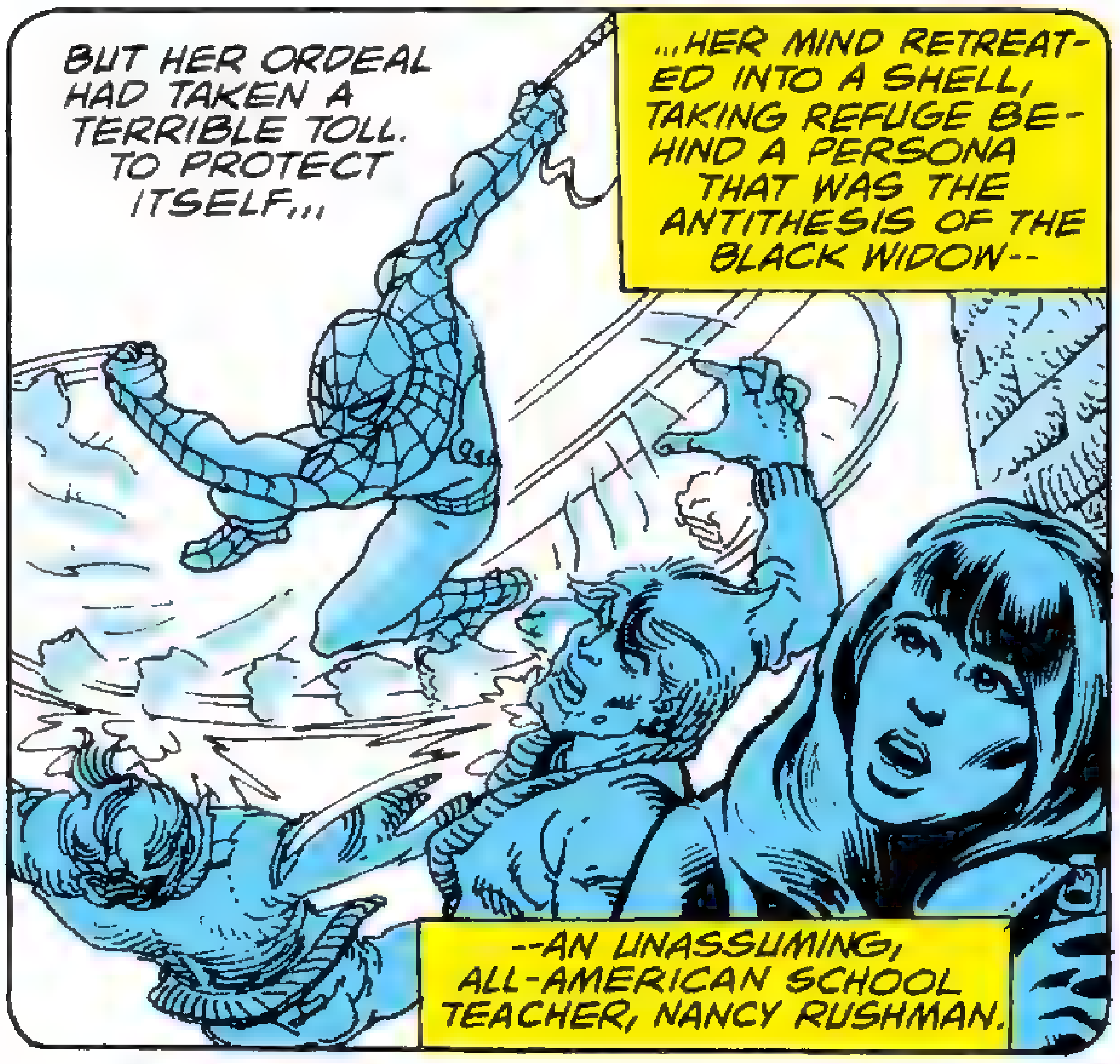

SHE MOVES SWIFTLY THROUGH THE DARK, SILENT SHIP--A SHADOW AMONG SHADOWS--WITH A GRACE AND SINUOUS POWER THAT WOULD DO A TIGRESS PROUD.
ONLY HER FACE BETRAYS HER...
...AS HER MIND SWITCHES MADLY FROM HER WIDOW PERSONA TO "NANCY RUSHMAN" AND BACK AGAIN.

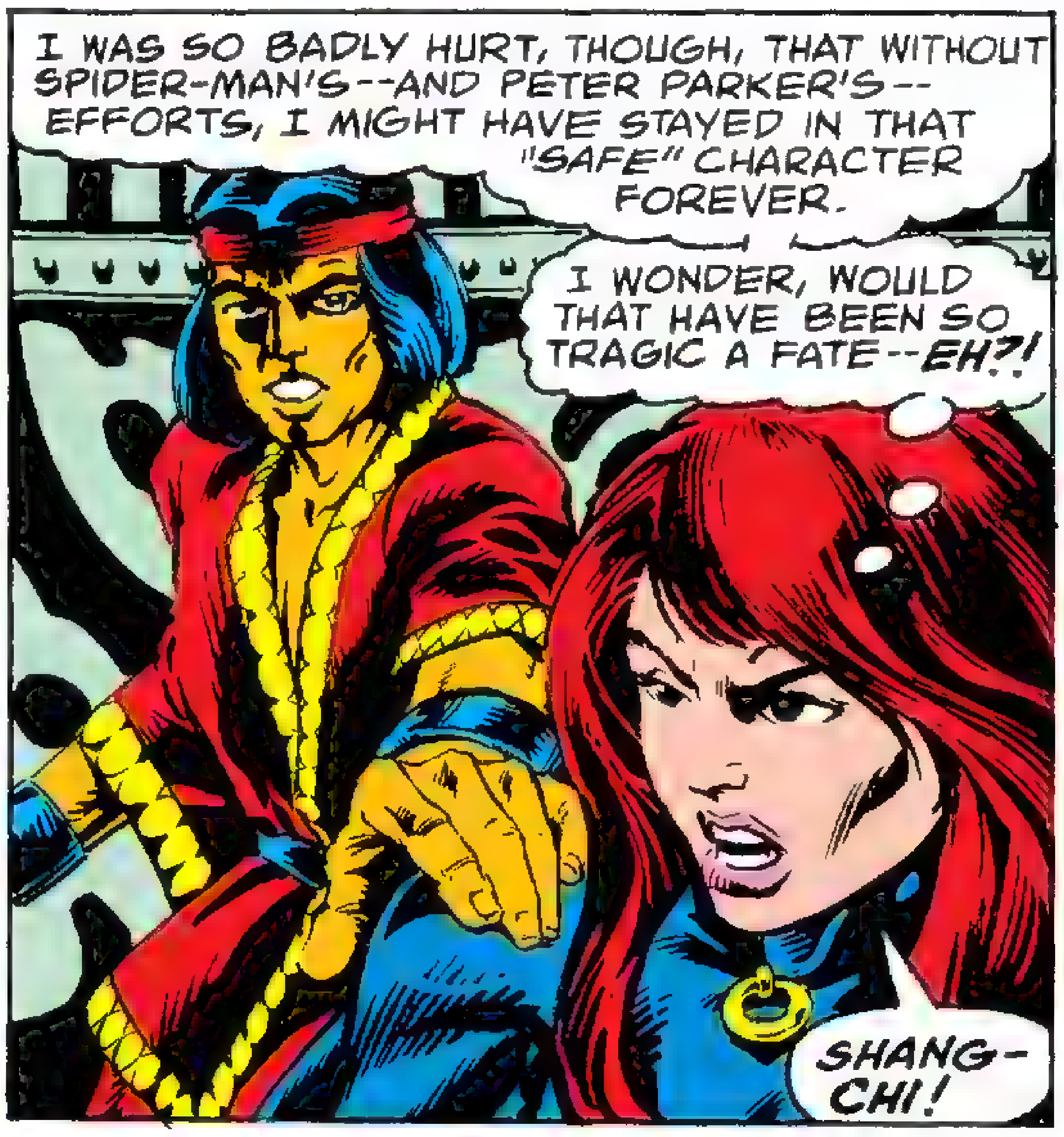

SHE'S STILL UNSURE WHICH IDENTITY IS TRULY HER, BUT WITH EACH PASSING MINUTE, MORE AND MORE MEMORIES TAKE SHAPE IN HER MIND. SHE WAS ON A...PERSONAL MISSION TO THE FAR EAST...
...WHEN SHE UNCOVERED VIPER'S PLANS.

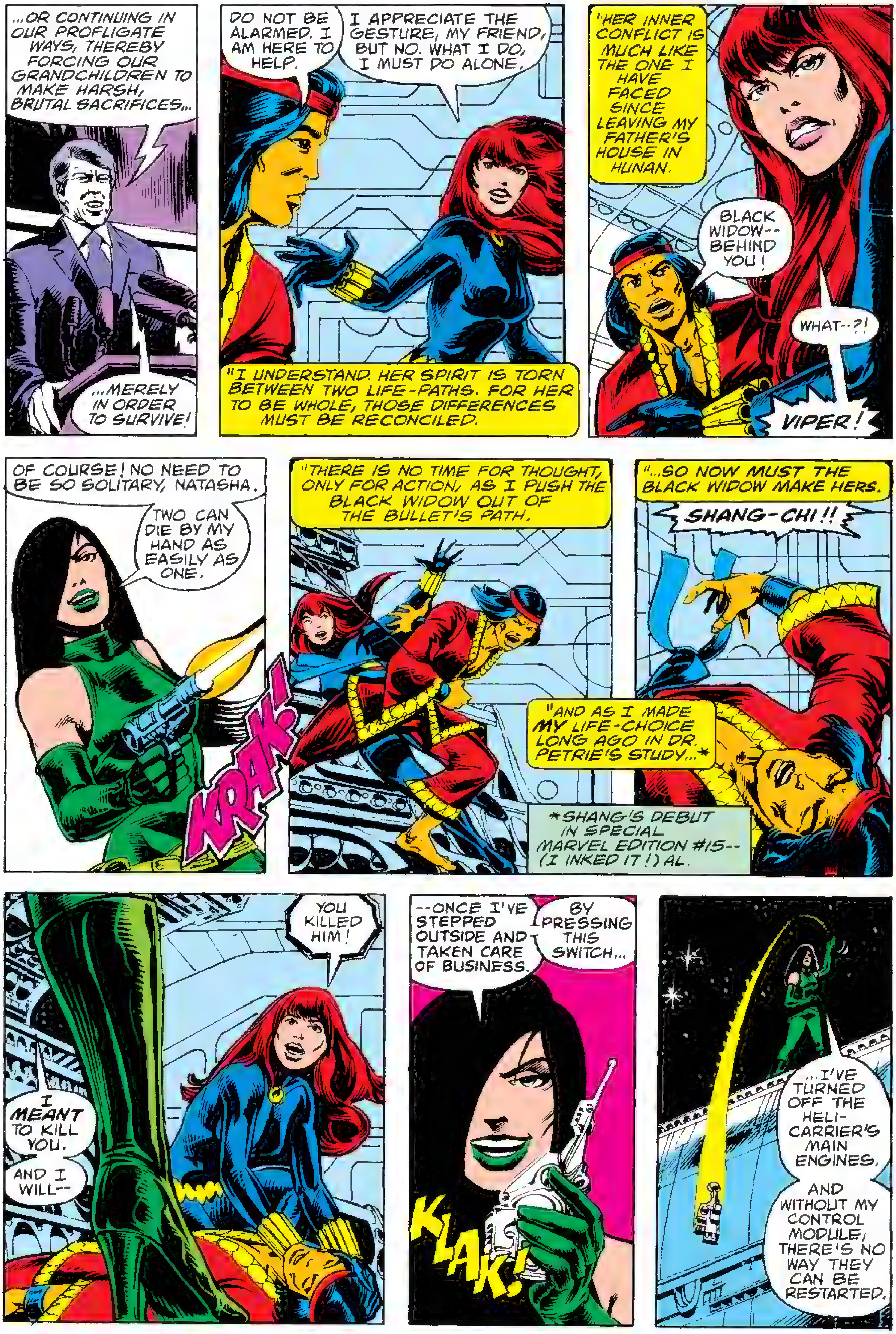

BEFORE SHE COULD WARN NICK FURY, SHE WAS BETRAYED...

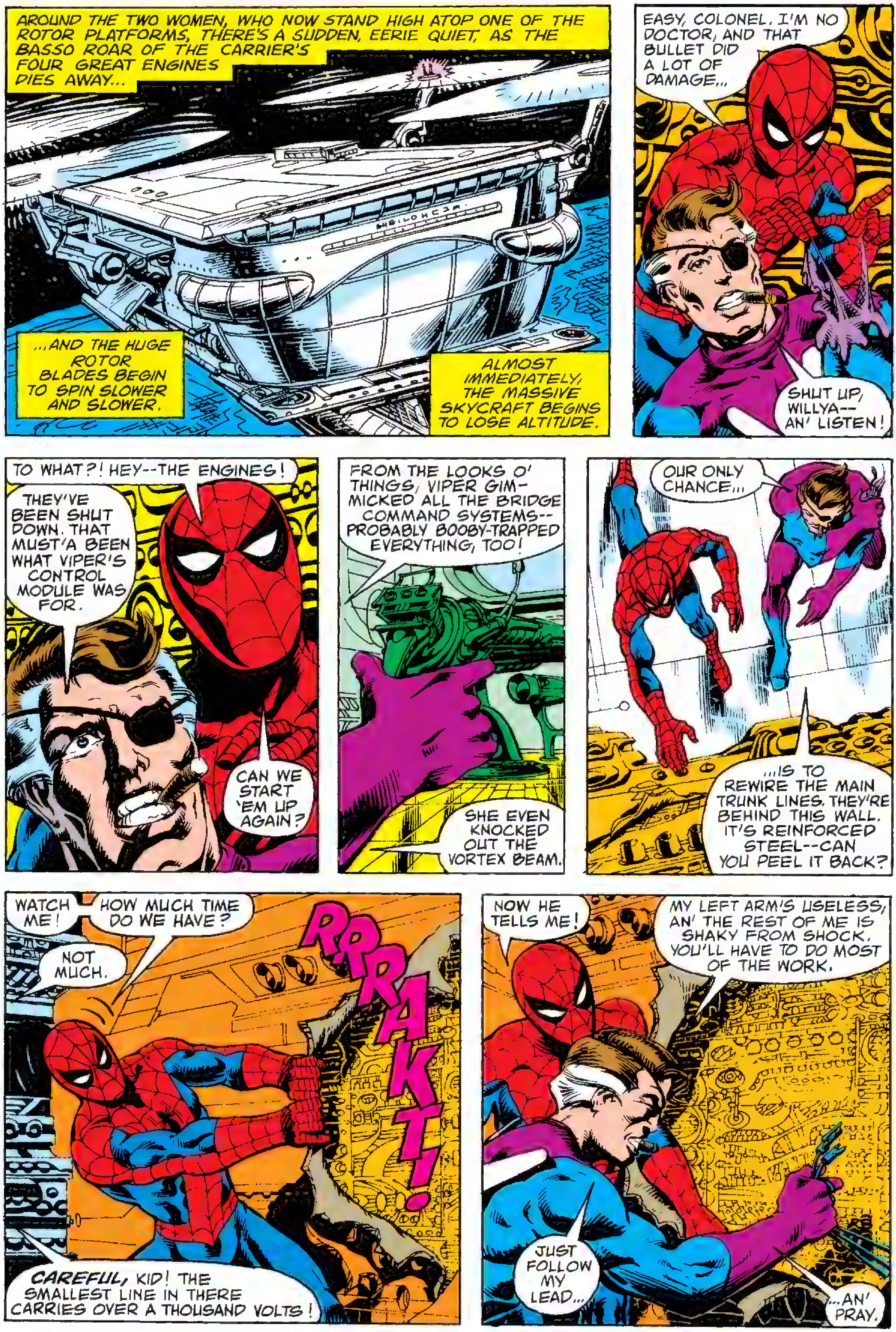

...AND CAPTURED. VIPER WANTED TO FIND OUT HOW MUCH SHE KNEW, HOW MUCH SHE'D TOLD FURY.
THE INTERROGATION LASTED DAYS...

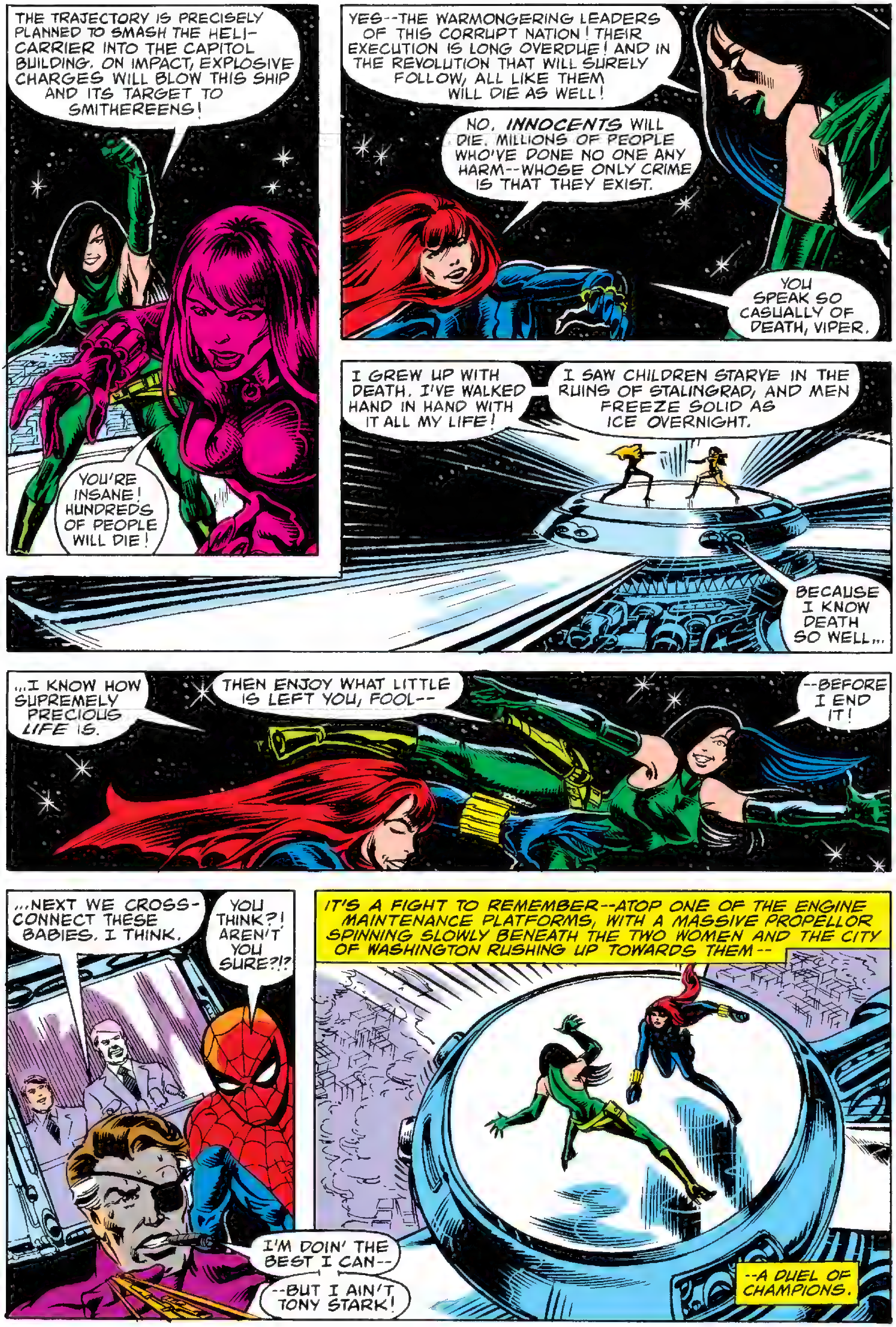

DESPITE VIPER'S BEST EFFORTS, SHE REFUSED TO TALK.
AND WHEN, THANKS TO A CARELESS GUARD, SHE SAW A CHANCE TO ESCAPE, SHE TOOK IT.

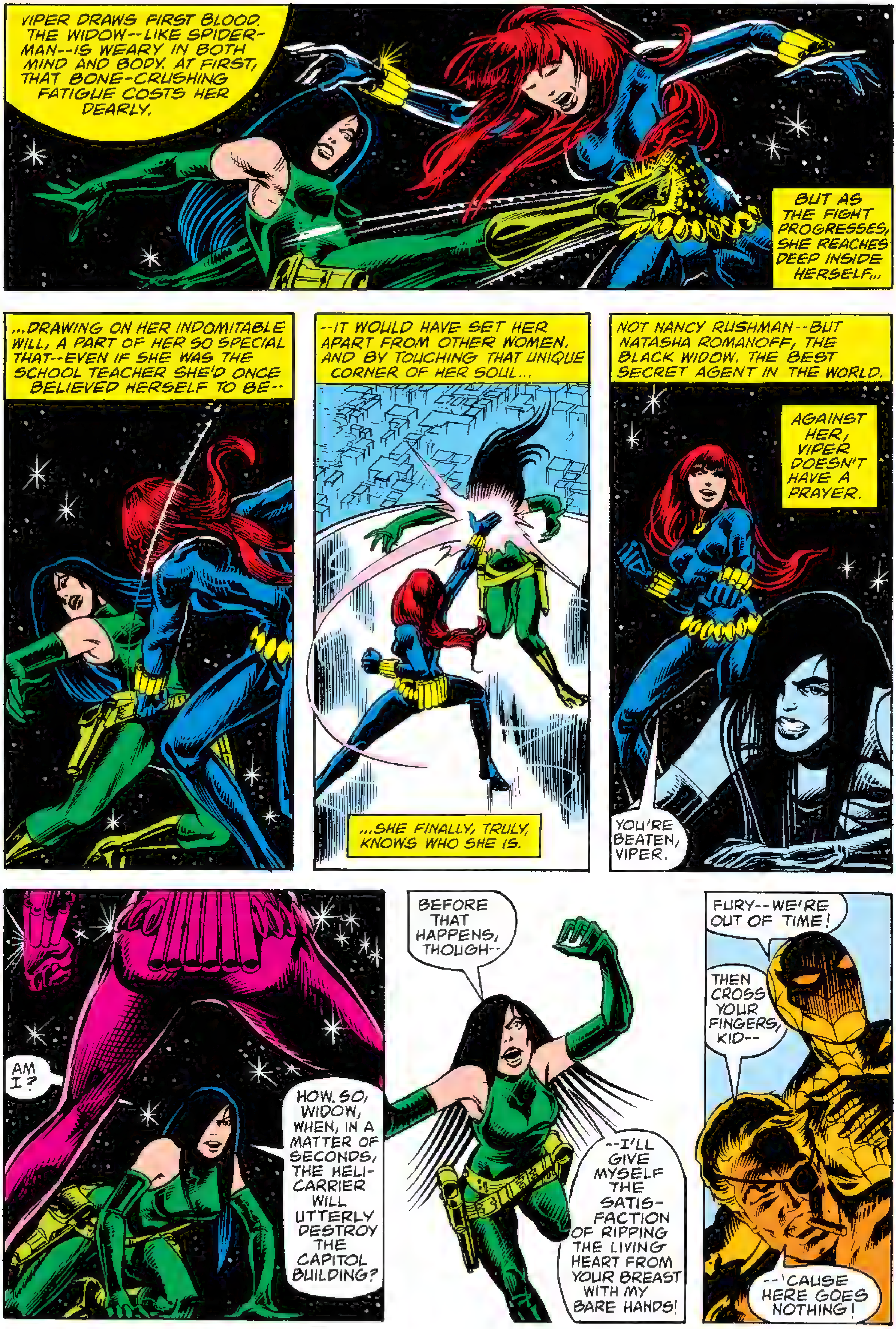

BUT HER ORDEAL HAD TAKEN A TERRIBLE TOLL. TO PROTECT ITSELF...
...HER MIND RETREATED INTO A SHELL, TAKING REFUGE BEHIND A PERSONA THAT WAS THE ANTITHESIS OF THE BLACK WIDOW--
--AN UNASSUMING, ALL-AMERICAN SCHOOL TEACHER, NANCY RUSHMAN.

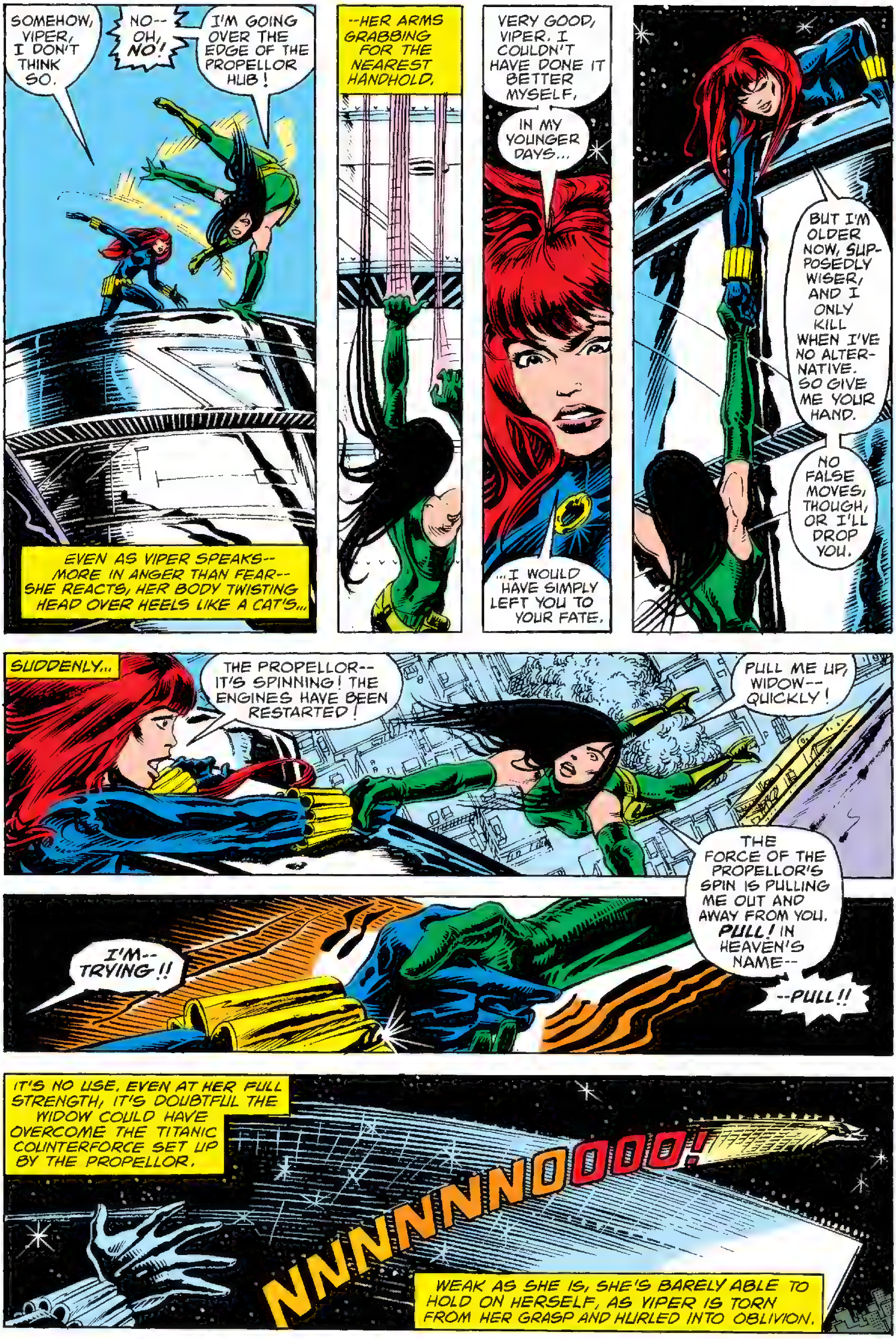

I WAS SO BADLY HURT, THOUGH, THAT WITHOUT SPIDER-MAN'S--AND PETER PARKER'S--EFFORTS, I MIGHT HAVE STAYED IN THAT "SAFE" CHARACTER FOREVER.
I WONDER, WOULD THAT HAVE BEEN SO TRAGIC A FATE--EH?!
SHANG-CHI!

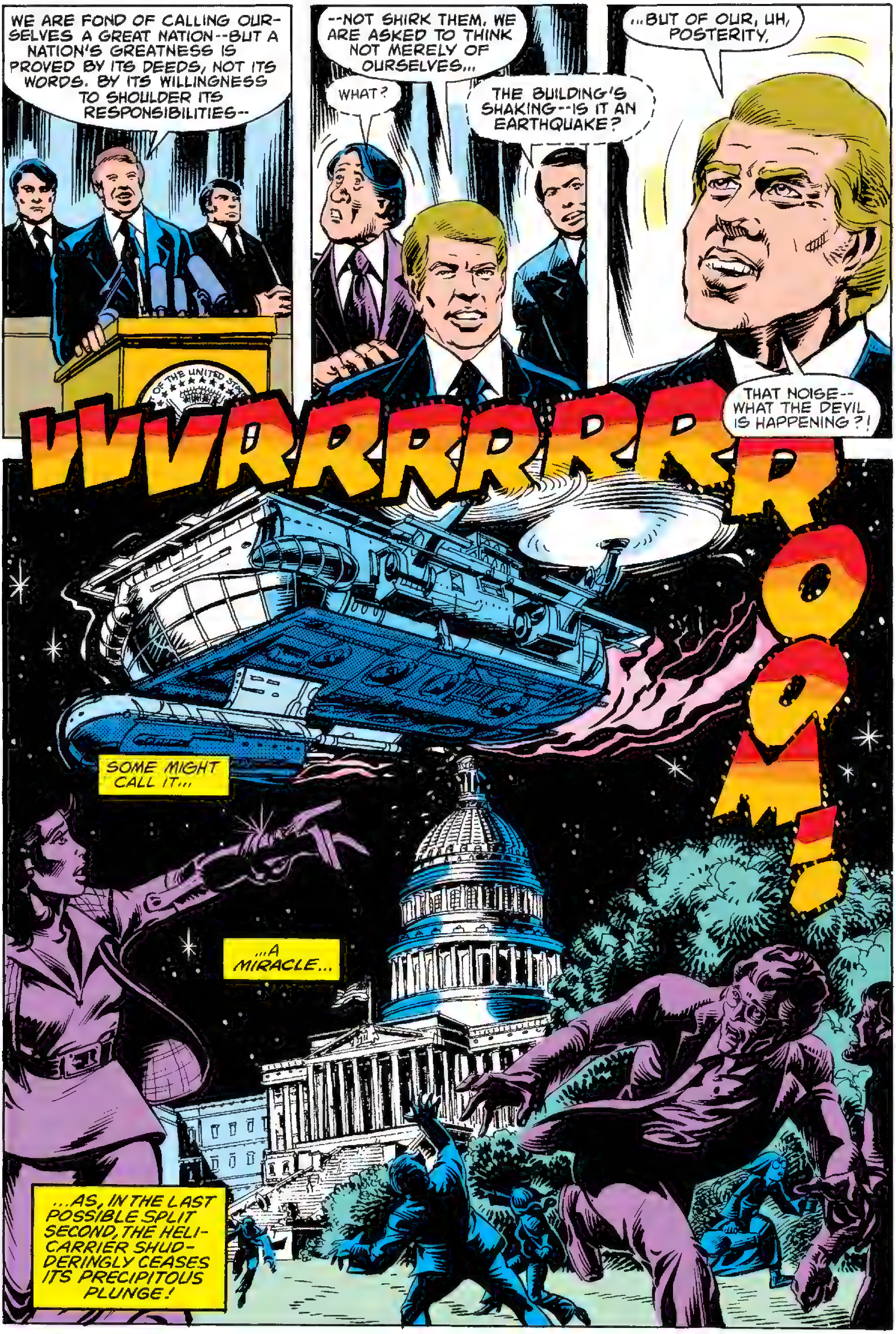

...OR CONTINUING IN OUR PROFLIGATE WAYS, THEREBY FORCING OUR GRANDCHILDREN TO MAKE HARSH, BRUTAL SACRIFICES...
...MERELY IN ORDER TO SURVIVE!
DO NOT BE ALARMED. I AM HERE TO HELP.
I APPRECIATE THE GESTURE, MY FRIEND, BUT NO. WHAT I DO, I MUST DO ALONE.
"I UNDERSTAND. HER SPIRIT IS TORN BETWEEN TWO LIFE-PATHS. FOR HER TO BE WHOLE, THOSE DIFFERENCES MUST BE RECONCILED.
"HER INNER CONFLICT IS MUCH LIKE THE ONE I HAVE FACED SINCE LEAVING MY FATHER'S HOUSE IN HUNAN.
BLACK WIDOW-- BEHIND YOU!
WHAT--?!
VIPER!
OF COURSE! NO NEED TO BE SO SOLITARY, NATASHA.
TWO CAN DIE BY MY HAND AS EASILY AS ONE.
KRAK!
"THERE IS NO TIME FOR THOUGHT, ONLY FOR ACTION, AS I PUSH THE BLACK WIDOW OUT OF THE BULLET'S PATH.
"...SO NOW MUST THE BLACK WIDOW MAKE HERS.
SHANG-CHI!!
"AND AS I MADE MY LIFE-CHOICE LONG AGO IN DR. PETRIE'S STUDY...*
*SHANG'S DEBUT IN SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION #15-- (I INKED IT!) AL.
YOU KILLED HIM!
I MEANT TO KILL YOU.
AND I WILL--
--ONCE I'VE STEPPED OUTSIDE AND TAKEN CARE OF BUSINESS.
BY PRESSING THIS SWITCH...
KLAK!
...I'VE TURNED OFF THE HELI-CARRIER'S MAIN ENGINES.
AND WITHOUT MY CONTROL MODULE, THERE'S NO WAY THEY CAN BE RESTARTED.

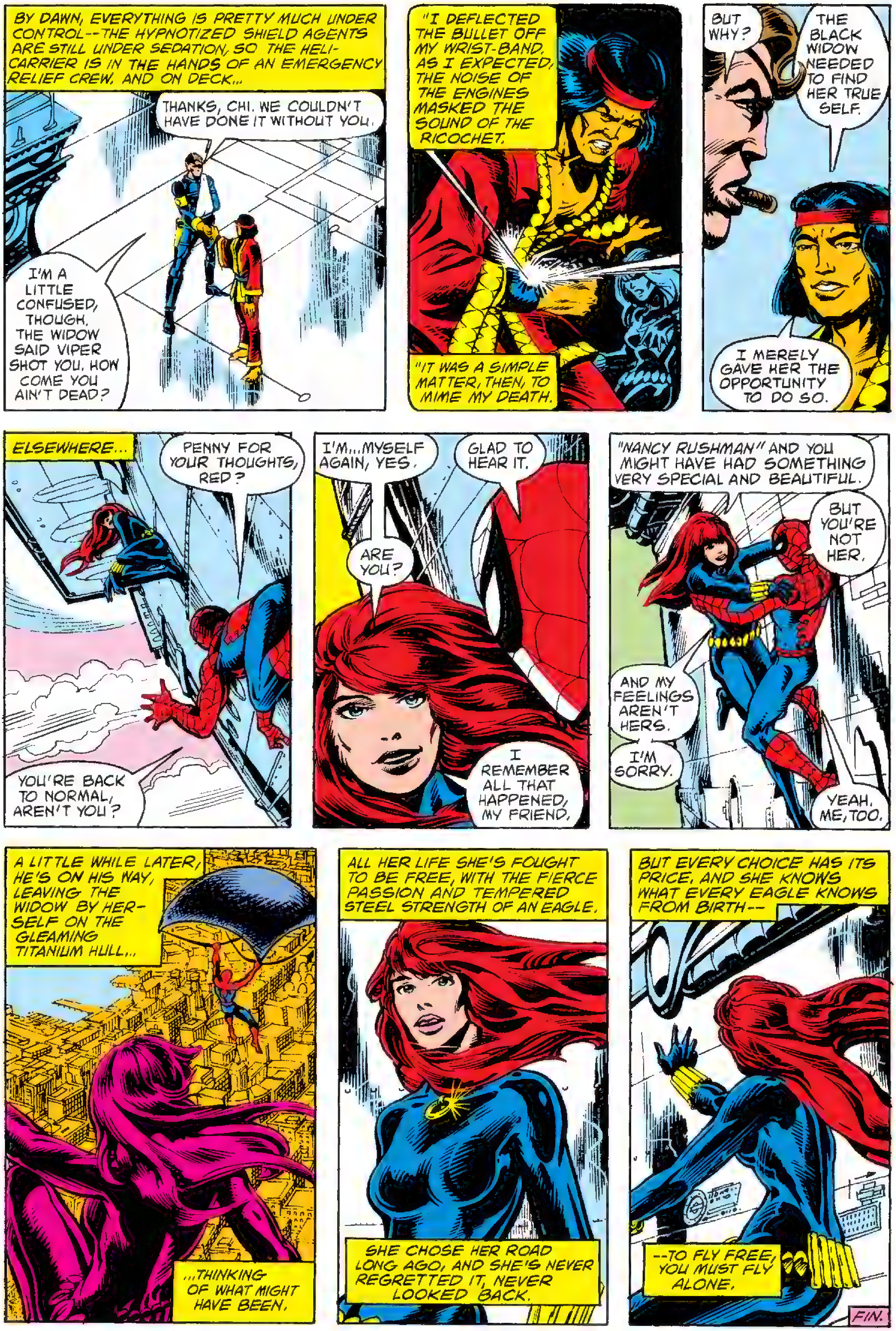

AROUND THE TWO WOMEN, WHO NOW STAND HIGH ATOP ONE OF THE ROTOR PLATFORMS, THERE'S A SUDDEN, EERIE QUIET, AS THE BASSO ROAR OF THE CARRIER'S FOUR GREAT ENGINES DIES AWAY...
...AND THE HUGE ROTOR BLADES BEGIN TO SPIN SLOWER AND SLOWER.
ALMOST IMMEDIATELY, THE MASSIVE SKYCRAFT BEGINS TO LOSE ALTITUDE.
EASY, COLONEL. I'M NO DOCTOR, AND THAT BULLET DID A LOT OF DAMAGE...
SHUT UP, WILLYA-- AN' LISTEN!
TO WHAT?! HEY--THE ENGINES!
THEY'VE BEEN SHUT DOWN. THAT MUST'A BEEN WHAT VIPER'S CONTROL MODULE WAS FOR.
CAN WE START 'EM UP AGAIN?
FROM THE LOOKS O' THINGS, VIPER GIM-MICKED ALL THE BRIDGE COMMAND SYSTEMS-- PROBABLY BOOBY-TRAPPED EVERYTHING, TOO!
SHE EVEN KNOCKED OUT THE VORTEX BEAM.
OUR ONLY CHANCE...
...IS TO REWIRE THE MAIN TRUNK LINES. THEY'RE BEHIND THIS WALL. IT'S REINFORCED STEEL--CAN YOU PEEL IT BACK?
WATCH ME!
HOW MUCH TIME DO WE HAVE?
NOT MUCH.
RRRAKT!
CAREFUL, KID! THE SMALLEST LINE IN THERE CARRIES OVER A THOUSAND VOLTS!
NOW HE TELLS ME!
MY LEFT ARM'S USELESS, AN' THE REST OF ME IS SHAKY FROM SHOCK. YOU'LL HAVE TO DO MOST OF THE WORK.
JUST FOLLOW MY LEAD...
...AN' PRAY.

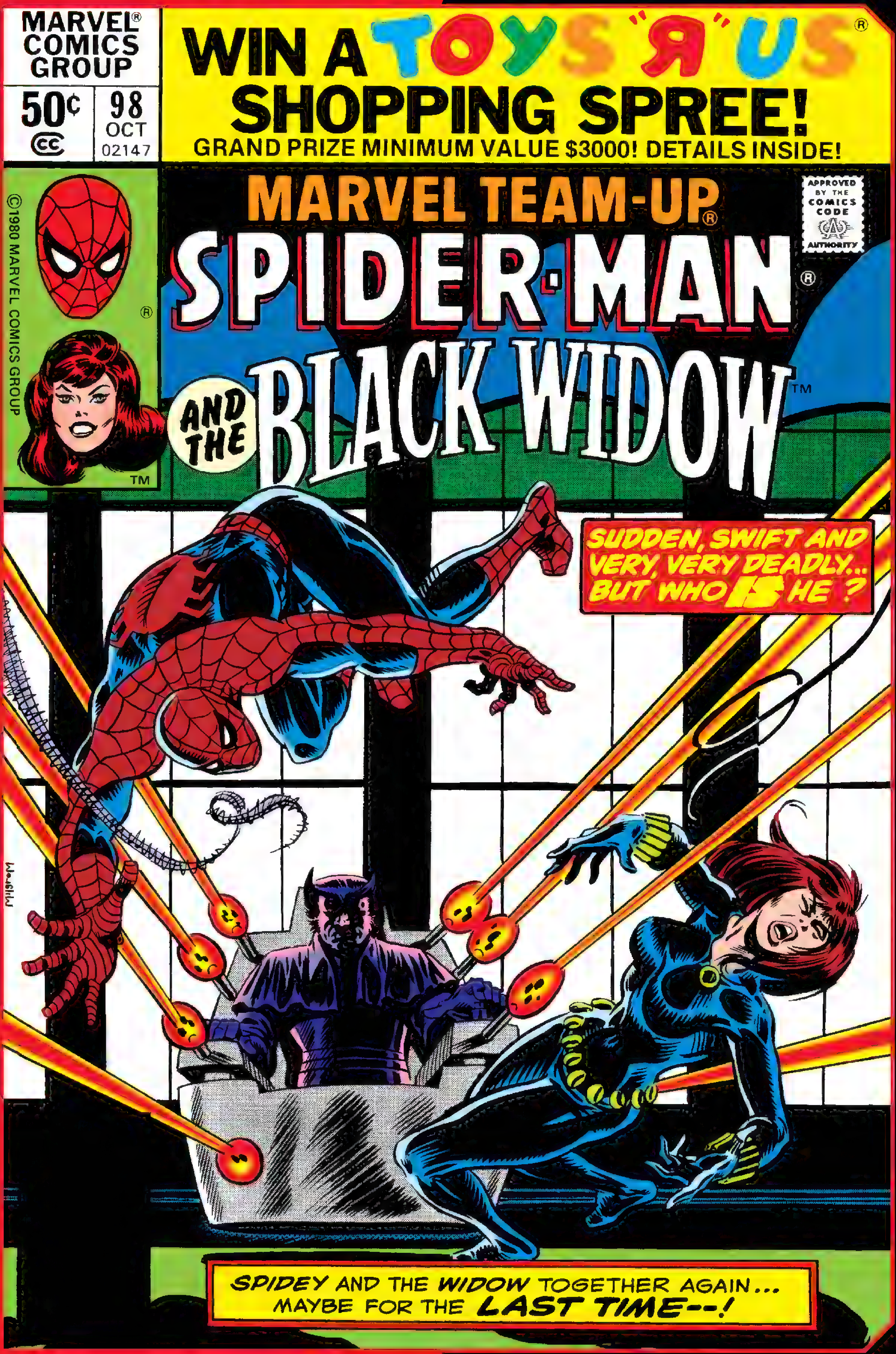

THE TRAJECTORY IS PRECISELY PLANNED TO SMASH THE HELI-CARRIER INTO THE CAPITOL BUILDING. ON IMPACT, EXPLOSIVE CHARGES WILL BLOW THIS SHIP AND ITS TARGET TO SMITHEREENS!
YOU'RE INSANE! HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE WILL DIE!
YES--THE WARMONGERING LEADERS OF THIS CORRUPT NATION! THEIR EXECUTION IS LONG OVERDUE! AND IN THE REVOLUTION THAT WILL SURELY FOLLOW, ALL LIKE THEM WILL DIE AS WELL!
NO. *INNOCENTS* WILL DIE. MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WHO'VE DONE NO ONE ANY HARM--WHOSE ONLY CRIME IS THAT THEY EXIST.
YOU SPEAK SO CASUALLY OF DEATH, VIPER.
I GREW UP WITH DEATH. I'VE WALKED HAND IN HAND WITH IT ALL MY LIFE!
I SAW CHILDREN STARVE IN THE RUINS OF STALINGRAD, AND MEN FREEZE SOLID AS ICE OVERNIGHT.
BECAUSE I KNOW DEATH SO WELL...
...I KNOW HOW SUPREMELY PRECIOUS *LIFE* IS.
THEN ENJOY WHAT LITTLE IS LEFT YOU, FOOL--
--BEFORE I END IT!
...NEXT WE CROSS-CONNECT THESE BABIES. I THINK.
YOU THINK?! AREN'T YOU SURE?!?
I'M DOIN' THE BEST I CAN--
--BUT I AIN'T TONY STARK!
IT'S A FIGHT TO REMEMBER--ATOP ONE OF THE ENGINE MAINTENANCE PLATFORMS, WITH A MASSIVE PROPELLOR SPINNING SLOWLY BENEATH THE TWO WOMEN AND THE CITY OF WASHINGTON RUSHING UP TOWARDS THEM--
--A DUEL OF CHAMPIONS.


VIPER DRAWS FIRST BLOOD. THE WIDOW--LIKE SPIDER-MAN--IS WEARY IN BOTH MIND AND BODY. AT FIRST, THAT BONE-CRUSHING FATIGUE COSTS HER DEARLY.
BUT AS THE FIGHT PROGRESSES, SHE REACHES DEEP INSIDE HERSELF...
...DRAWING ON HER INDOMITABLE WILL, A PART OF HER SO SPECIAL THAT--EVEN IF SHE WAS THE SCHOOL TEACHER SHE'D ONCE BELIEVED HERSELF TO BE--
--IT WOULD HAVE SET HER APART FROM OTHER WOMEN. AND BY TOUCHING THAT UNIQUE CORNER OF HER SOUL...
...SHE FINALLY, TRULY, KNOWS WHO SHE IS.
NOT NANCY RUSHMAN--BUT NATASHA ROMANOFF, THE BLACK WIDOW. THE BEST SECRET AGENT IN THE WORLD.
AGAINST HER, VIPER DOESN'T HAVE A PRAYER.
YOU'RE BEATEN, VIPER.
AM I?
HOW SO, WIDOW, WHEN, IN A MATTER OF SECONDS, THE HELI-CARRIER WILL UTTERLY DESTROY THE CAPITOL BUILDING?
BEFORE THAT HAPPENS, THOUGH--
--I'LL GIVE MYSELF THE SATIS-FACTION OF RIPPING THE LIVING HEART FROM YOUR BREAST WITH MY BARE HANDS!
FURY--WE'RE OUT OF TIME!
THEN CROSS YOUR FINGERS, KID--
--'CAUSE HERE GOES NOTHING!


SOMEHOW, VIPER, I DON'T THINK SO.
NO-- OH, NO!
I'M GOING OVER THE EDGE OF THE PROPELLOR HUB!
EVEN AS VIPER SPEAKS-- MORE IN ANGER THAN FEAR-- SHE REACTS, HER BODY TWISTING HEAD OVER HEELS LIKE A CAT'S...
--HER ARMS GRABBING FOR THE NEAREST HANDHOLD.
VERY GOOD, VIPER. I COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT BETTER MYSELF.
IN MY YOUNGER DAYS...
...I WOULD HAVE SIMPLY LEFT YOU TO YOUR FATE.
BUT I'M OLDER NOW, SUPPOSEDLY WISER, AND I ONLY KILL WHEN I'VE NO ALTERNATIVE. SO GIVE ME YOUR HAND.
NO FALSE MOVES, THOUGH, OR I'LL DROP YOU.
SUDDENLY...
THE PROPELLOR-- IT'S SPINNING! THE ENGINES HAVE BEEN RESTARTED!
PULL ME UP, WIDOW-- QUICKLY!
THE FORCE OF THE PROPELLOR'S SPIN IS PULLING ME OUT AND AWAY FROM YOU. PULL! IN HEAVEN'S NAME--
I'M-- TRYING!!
--PULL!!
IT'S NO USE. EVEN AT HER FULL STRENGTH, IT'S DOUBTFUL THE WIDOW COULD HAVE OVERCOME THE TITANIC COUNTERFORCE SET UP BY THE PROPELLOR.
NNNNNNNOOOOO!
WEAK AS SHE IS, SHE'S BARELY ABLE TO HOLD ON HERSELF, AS VIPER IS TORN FROM HER GRASP AND HURLED INTO OBLIVION.


WE ARE FOND OF CALLING OURSELVES A GREAT NATION--BUT A NATION'S GREATNESS IS PROVED BY ITS DEEDS, NOT ITS WORDS. BY ITS WILLINGNESS TO SHOULDER ITS RESPONSIBILITIES--
--NOT SHIRK THEM. WE ARE ASKED TO THINK NOT MERELY OF OURSELVES...
WHAT?
THE BUILDING'S SHAKING--IS IT AN EARTHQUAKE?
...BUT OF OUR, UH, POSTERITY.
THAT NOISE-- WHAT THE DEVIL IS HAPPENING?!
VVVRRRRRRROOOM!
SOME MIGHT CALL IT...
...A MIRACLE...
...AS, IN THE LAST POSSIBLE SPLIT SECOND, THE HELI-CARRIER SHUDDERINGLY CEASES ITS PRECIPITOUS PLUNGE!


BY DAWN, EVERYTHING IS PRETTY MUCH UNDER CONTROL--THE HYPNOTIZED SHIELD AGENTS ARE STILL UNDER SEDATION, SO THE HELICARRIER IS IN THE HANDS OF AN EMERGENCY RELIEF CREW. AND ON DECK...
THANKS, CHI. WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU.
I'M A LITTLE CONFUSED, THOUGH. THE WIDOW SAID VIPER SHOT YOU. HOW COME YOU AIN'T DEAD?
"I DEFLECTED THE BULLET OFF MY WRIST-BAND. AS I EXPECTED, THE NOISE OF THE ENGINES MASKED THE SOUND OF THE RICOCHET.
"IT WAS A SIMPLE MATTER, THEN, TO MIME MY DEATH.
BUT WHY?
THE BLACK WIDOW NEEDED TO FIND HER TRUE SELF.
I MERELY GAVE HER THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO.
ELSEWHERE...
PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS, RED?
YOU'RE BACK TO NORMAL, AREN'T YOU?
I'M...MYSELF AGAIN, YES.
GLAD TO HEAR IT.
ARE YOU?
I REMEMBER ALL THAT HAPPENED, MY FRIEND.
"NANCY RUSHMAN" AND YOU MIGHT HAVE HAD SOMETHING VERY SPECIAL AND BEAUTIFUL.
BUT YOU'RE NOT HER.
AND MY FEELINGS AREN'T HERS.
I'M SORRY.
YEAH. ME, TOO.
A LITTLE WHILE LATER, HE'S ON HIS WAY, LEAVING THE WIDOW BY HERSELF ON THE GLEAMING TITANIUM HULL...
...THINKING OF WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.
ALL HER LIFE SHE'S FOUGHT TO BE FREE, WITH THE FIERCE PASSION AND TEMPERED STEEL STRENGTH OF AN EAGLE.
SHE CHOSE HER ROAD LONG AGO, AND SHE'S NEVER REGRETTED IT, NEVER LOOKED BACK.
BUT EVERY CHOICE HAS ITS PRICE, AND SHE KNOWS WHAT EVERY EAGLE KNOWS FROM BIRTH--
--TO FLY FREE, YOU MUST FLY ALONE.
FIN.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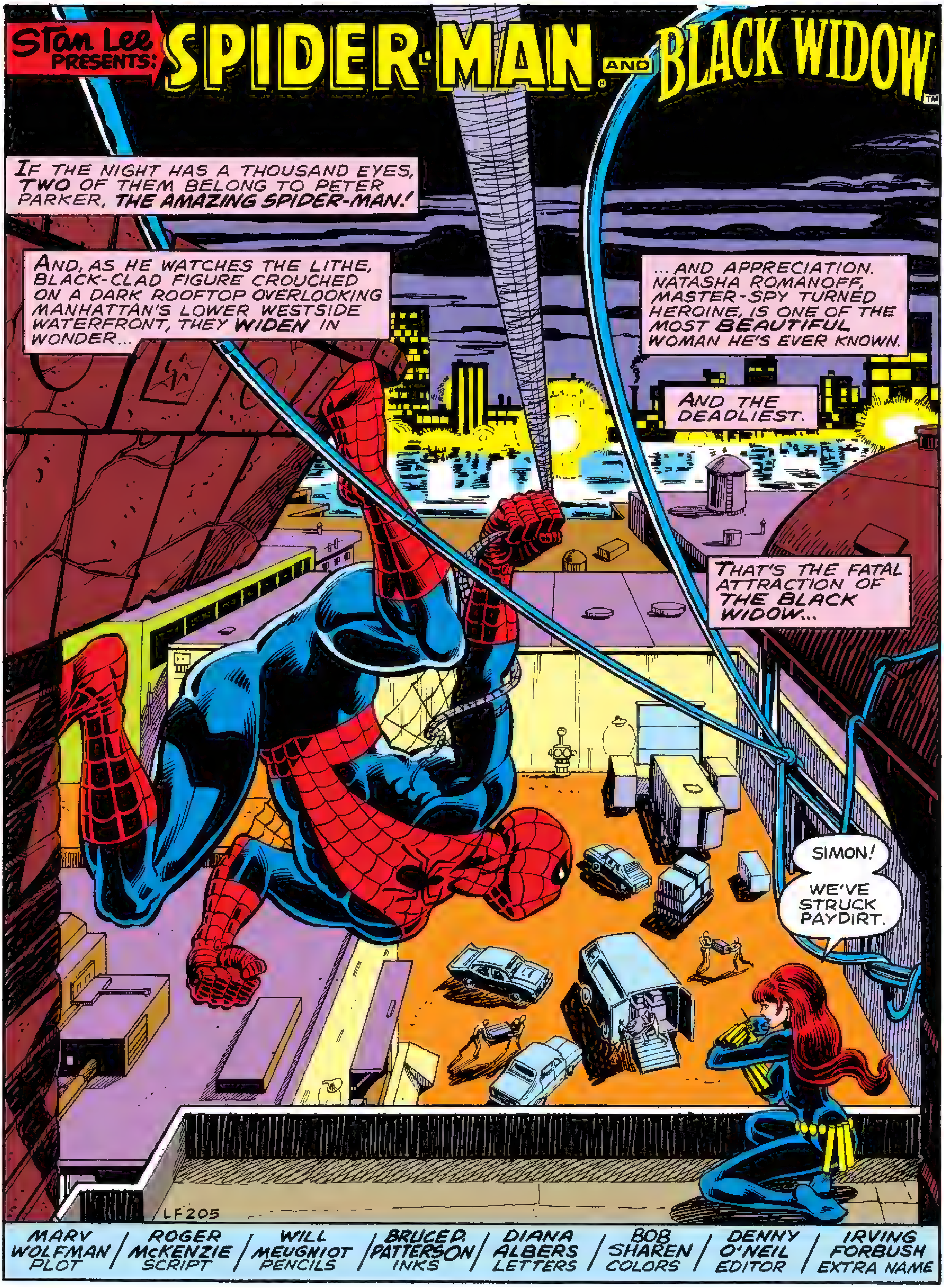
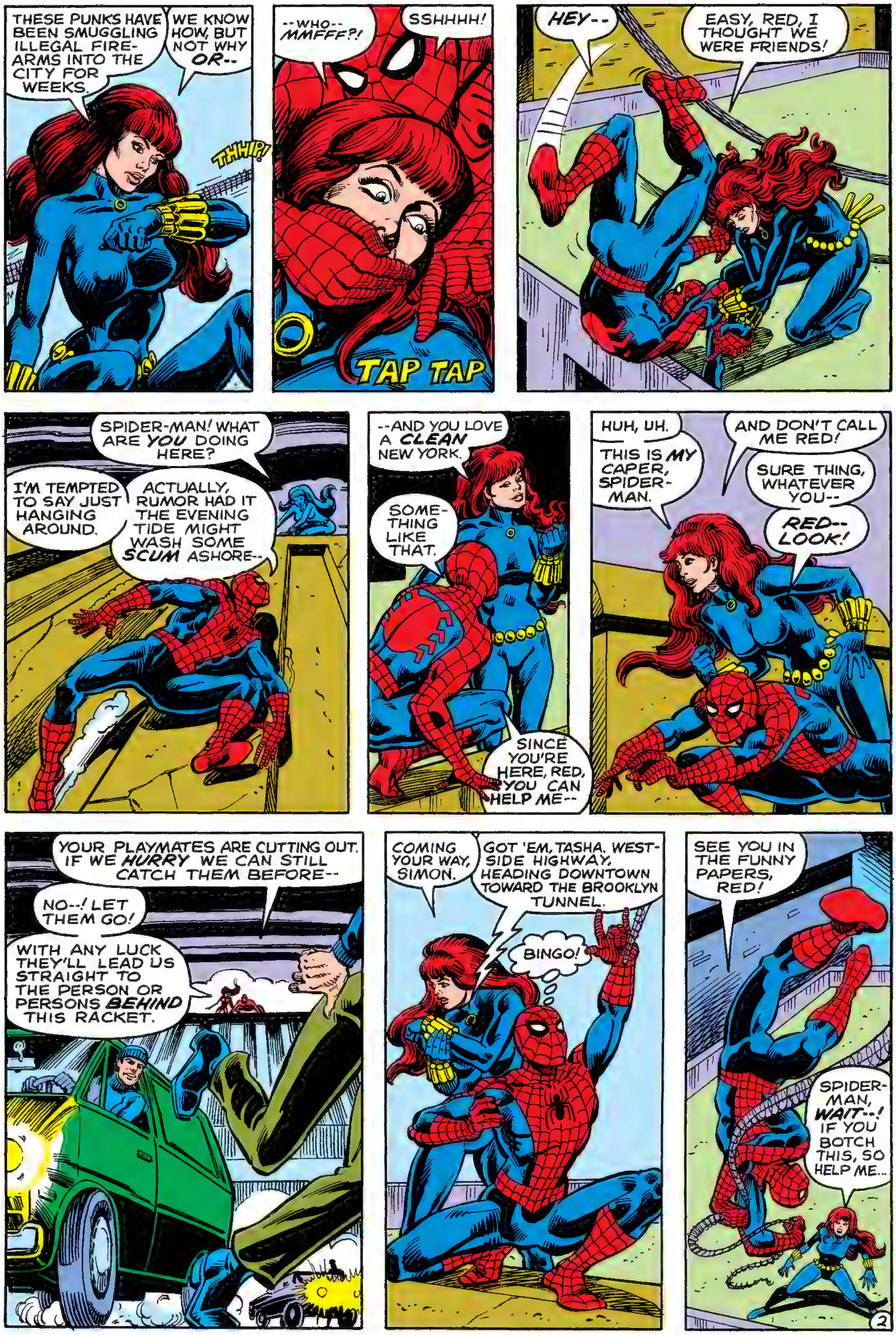
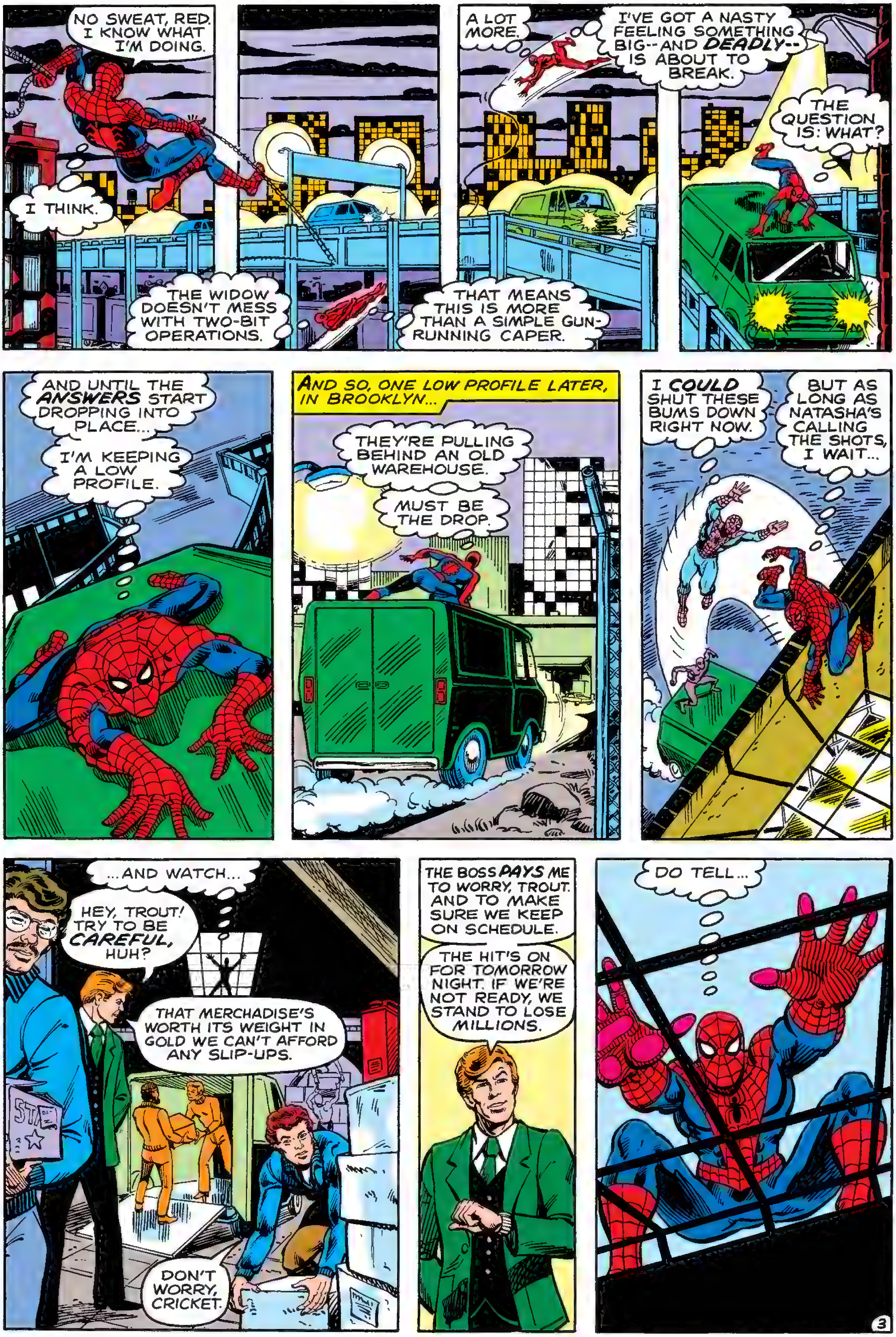
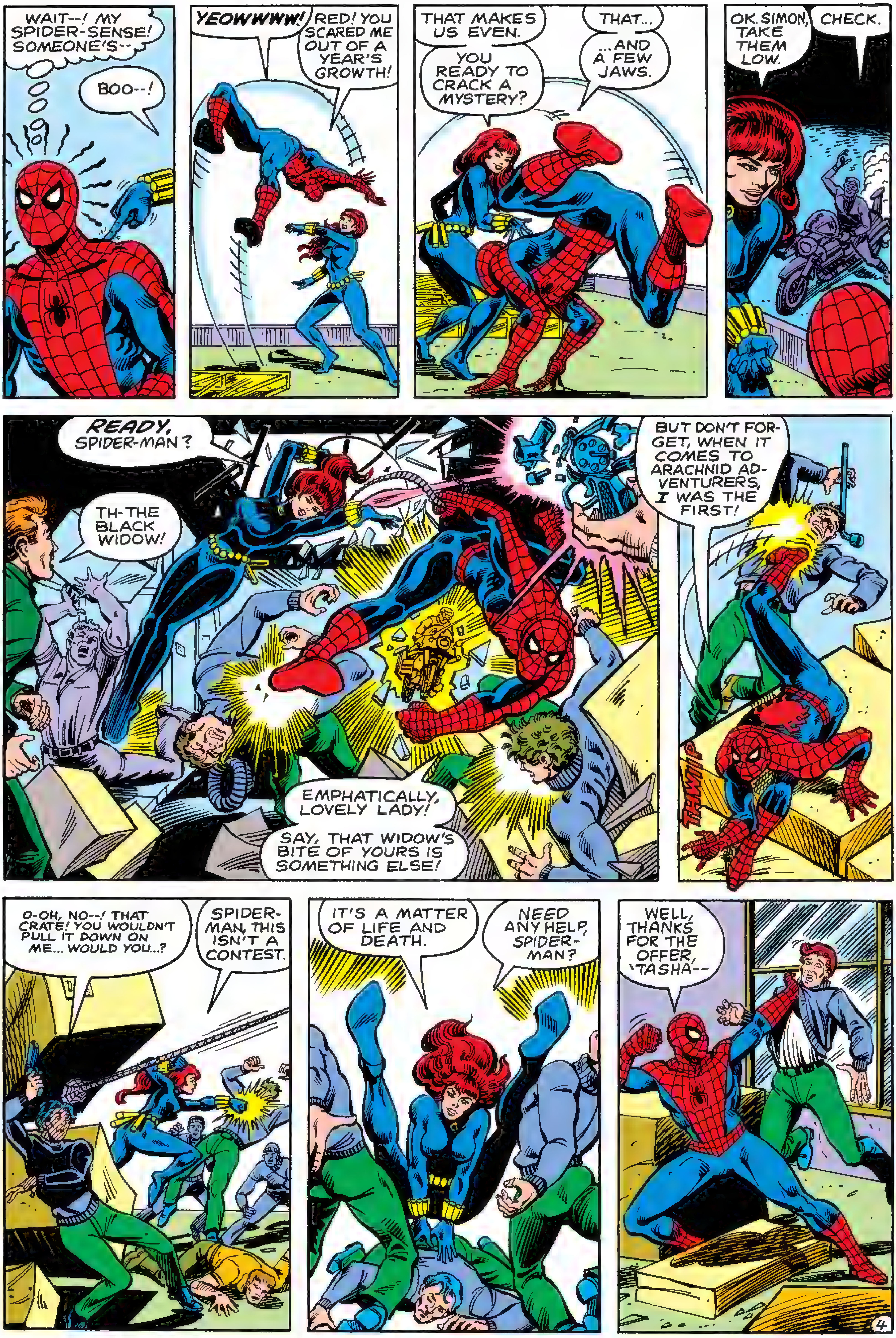
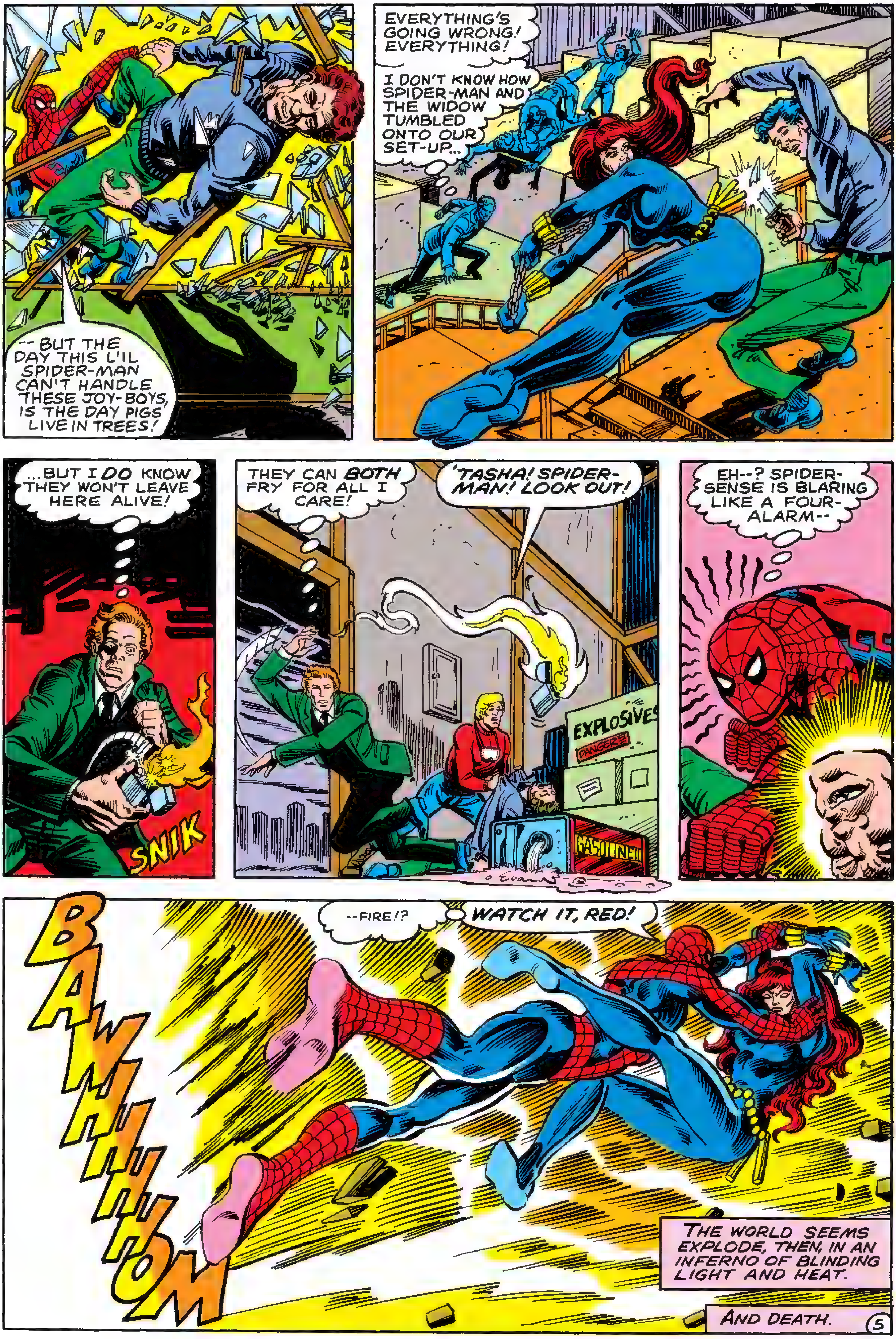
SUDDEN, SWIFT AND VERY, VERY DEADLY... BUT WHO IS HE ?
SPIDEY AND THE WIDOW TOGETHER AGAIN... MAYBE FOR THE LAST TIME--!

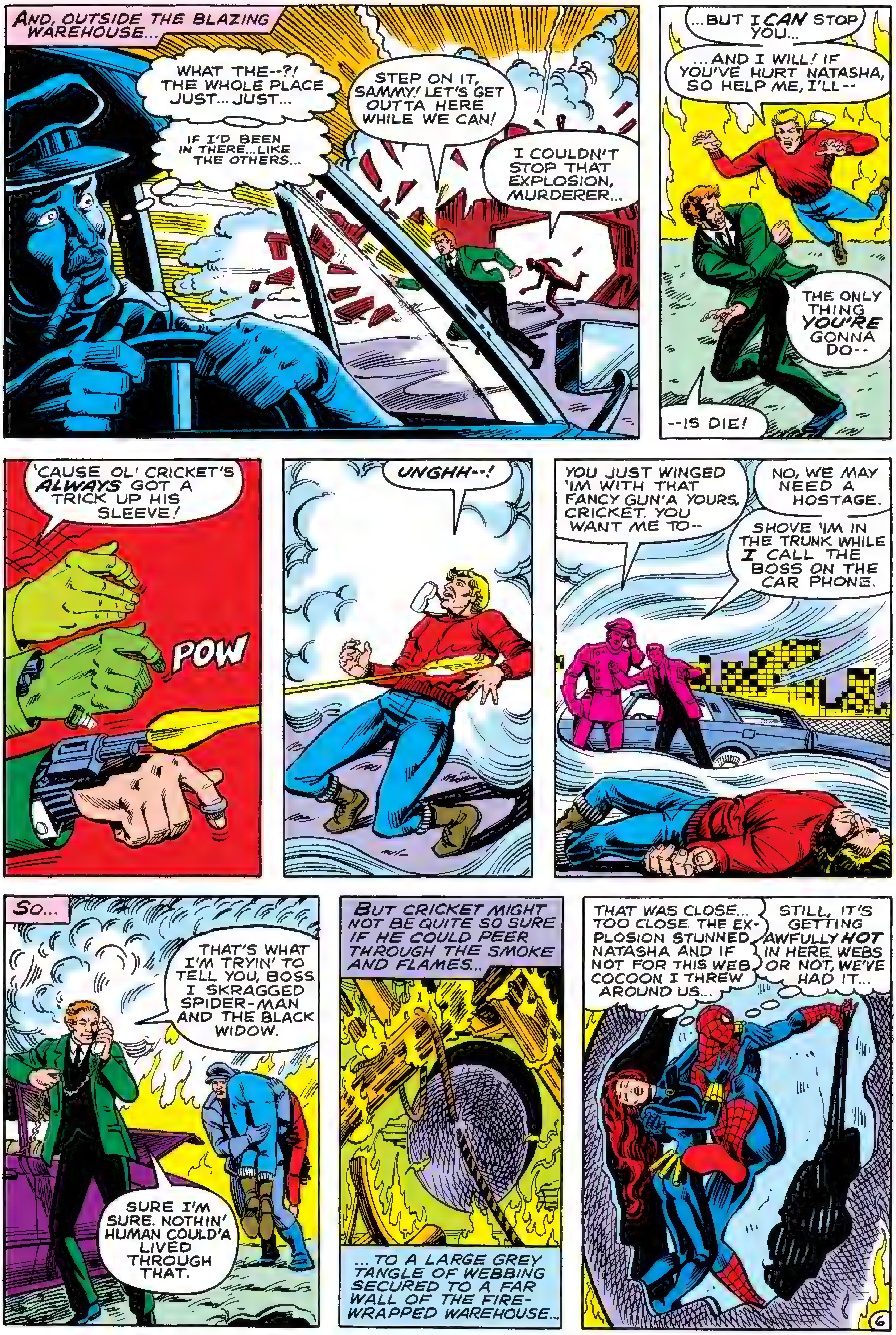

STAN LEE PRESENTS: SPIDER-MAN® AND BLACK WIDOW™
IF THE NIGHT HAS A THOUSAND EYES, TWO OF THEM BELONG TO PETER PARKER, THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN!
AND, AS HE WATCHES THE LITHE, BLACK-CLAD FIGURE CROUCHED ON A DARK ROOFTOP OVERLOOKING MANHATTAN'S LOWER WESTSIDE WATERFRONT, THEY WIDEN IN WONDER...
...AND APPRECIATION. NATASHA ROMANOFF, MASTER-SPY TURNED HEROINE, IS ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN HE'S EVER KNOWN.
AND THE DEADLIEST.
THAT'S THE FATAL ATTRACTION OF THE BLACK WIDOW...
SIMON!
WE'VE STRUCK PAYDIRT.
LF205
MARV WOLFMAN PLOT / ROGER McKENZIE SCRIPT / WILL MEUGNIOT PENCILS / BRUCE D. PATTERSON INKS / DIANA ALBERS LETTERS / BOB SHAREN COLORS / DENNY O'NEIL EDITOR / IRVING FORBUSH EXTRA NAME

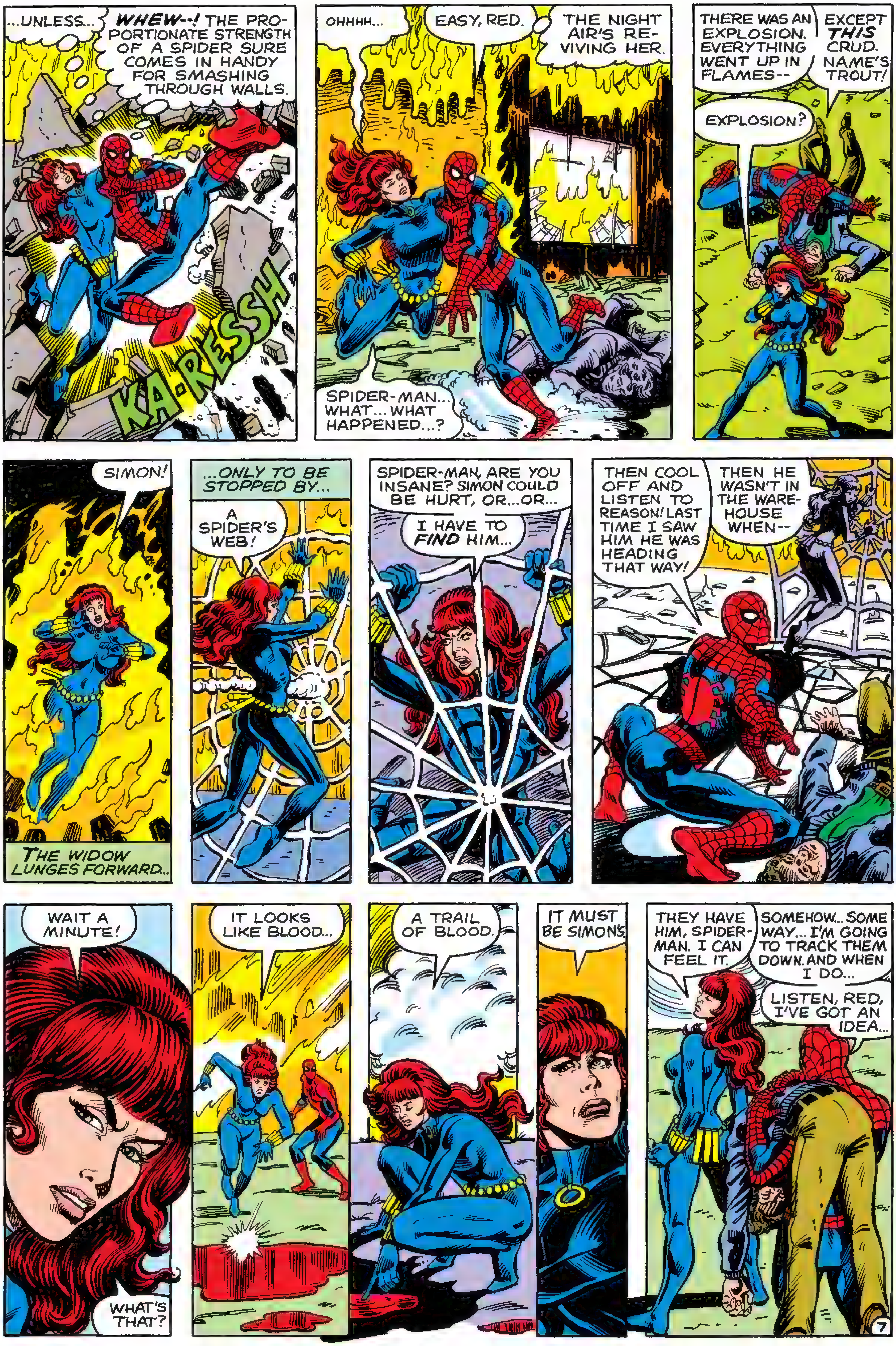

THESE PUNKS HAVE BEEN SMUGGLING ILLEGAL FIRE-ARMS INTO THE CITY FOR WEEKS.
WE KNOW HOW, BUT NOT WHY OR--
THHIP!
--WHO-- MMFFF?!
SSHHHH!
TAP TAP
HEY--
EASY, RED, I THOUGHT WE WERE FRIENDS!
SPIDER-MAN! WHAT ARE *YOU* DOING HERE?
I'M TEMPTED TO SAY JUST HANGING AROUND.
ACTUALLY, RUMOR HAD IT THE EVENING TIDE MIGHT WASH SOME *SCUM* ASHORE--
--AND YOU LOVE A *CLEAN* NEW YORK.
SOME-THING LIKE THAT.
SINCE YOU'RE HERE, RED, *YOU* CAN HELP ME--
HUH, UH.
THIS IS *MY* CAPER, SPIDER-MAN.
AND DON'T CALL ME RED!
SURE THING, WHATEVER YOU--
RED-- LOOK!
YOUR PLAYMATES ARE CUTTING OUT. IF WE *HURRY* WE CAN STILL CATCH THEM BEFORE--
NO--! LET THEM GO!
WITH ANY LUCK THEY'LL LEAD US STRAIGHT TO THE PERSON OR PERSONS *BEHIND* THIS RACKET.
COMING YOUR WAY, SIMON.
GOT 'EM, TASHA. WEST-SIDE HIGHWAY, HEADING DOWNTOWN TOWARD THE BROOKLYN TUNNEL.
BINGO!
SEE YOU IN THE FUNNY PAPERS, RED!
SPIDER-MAN, *WAIT--!* IF YOU BOTCH THIS, SO HELP ME...

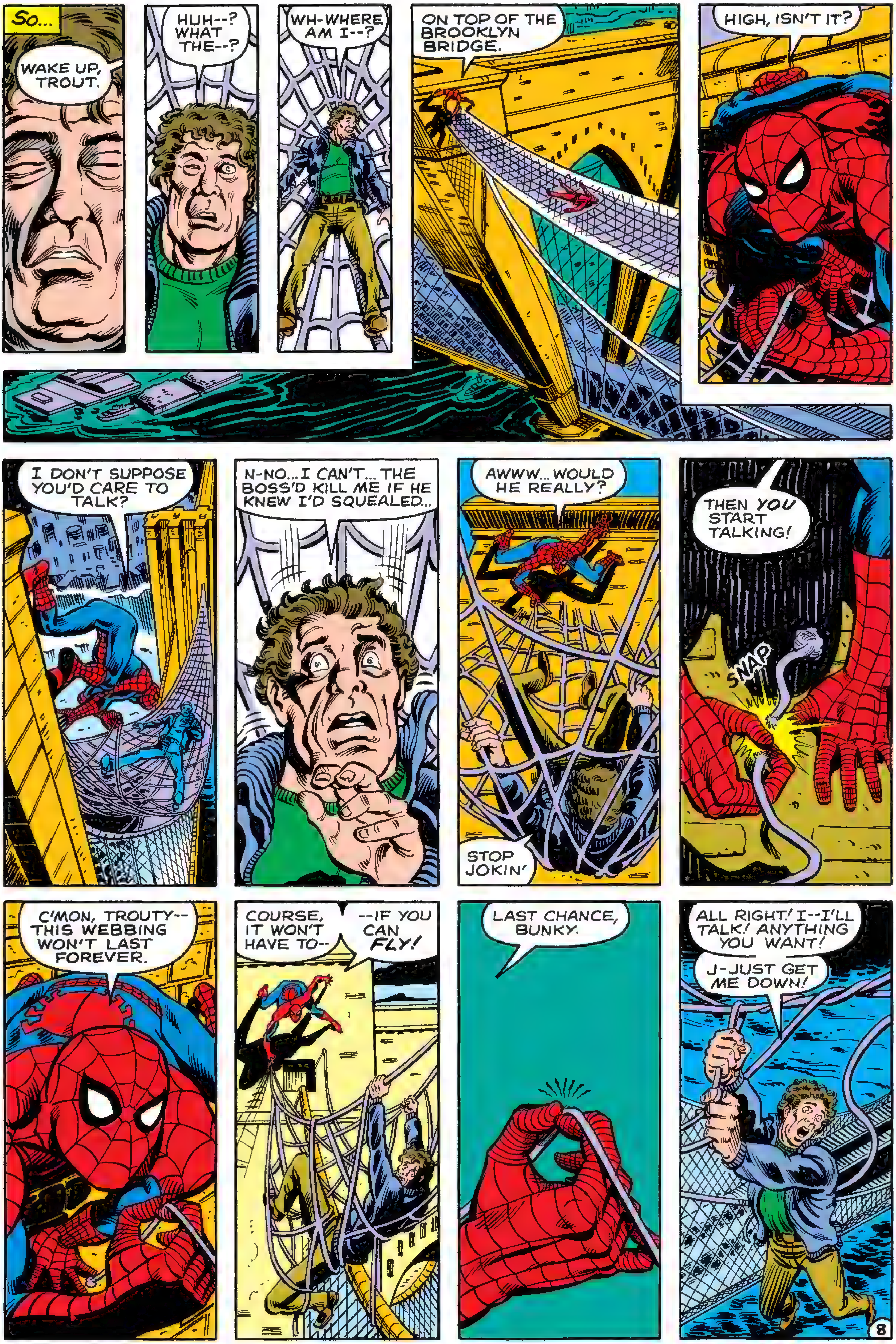

NO SWEAT, RED. I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING.
I THINK.
THE WIDOW DOESN'T MESS WITH TWO-BIT OPERATIONS.
THAT MEANS THIS IS MORE THAN A SIMPLE GUN-RUNNING CAPER.
A LOT MORE.
I'VE GOT A NASTY FEELING SOMETHING BIG--AND *DEADLY*--IS ABOUT TO BREAK.
THE QUESTION IS: WHAT?
AND UNTIL THE *ANSWERS* START DROPPING INTO PLACE...
I'M KEEPING A LOW PROFILE.
AND SO, ONE LOW PROFILE LATER, IN BROOKLYN...
THEY'RE PULLING BEHIND AN OLD WAREHOUSE.
MUST BE THE DROP.
I *COULD* SHUT THESE BUMS DOWN RIGHT NOW.
BUT AS LONG AS NATASHA'S CALLING THE SHOTS, I WAIT...
...AND WATCH...
HEY, TROUT! TRY TO BE *CAREFUL,* HUH?
THAT MERCHADISE'S WORTH ITS WEIGHT IN GOLD WE CAN'T AFFORD ANY SLIP-UPS.
DON'T WORRY, CRICKET.
THE BOSS *PAYS* ME TO WORRY, TROUT. AND TO MAKE SURE WE KEEP ON SCHEDULE.
THE HIT'S ON FOR TOMORROW NIGHT. IF WE'RE NOT READY, WE STAND TO LOSE MILLIONS.
DO TELL...
STA

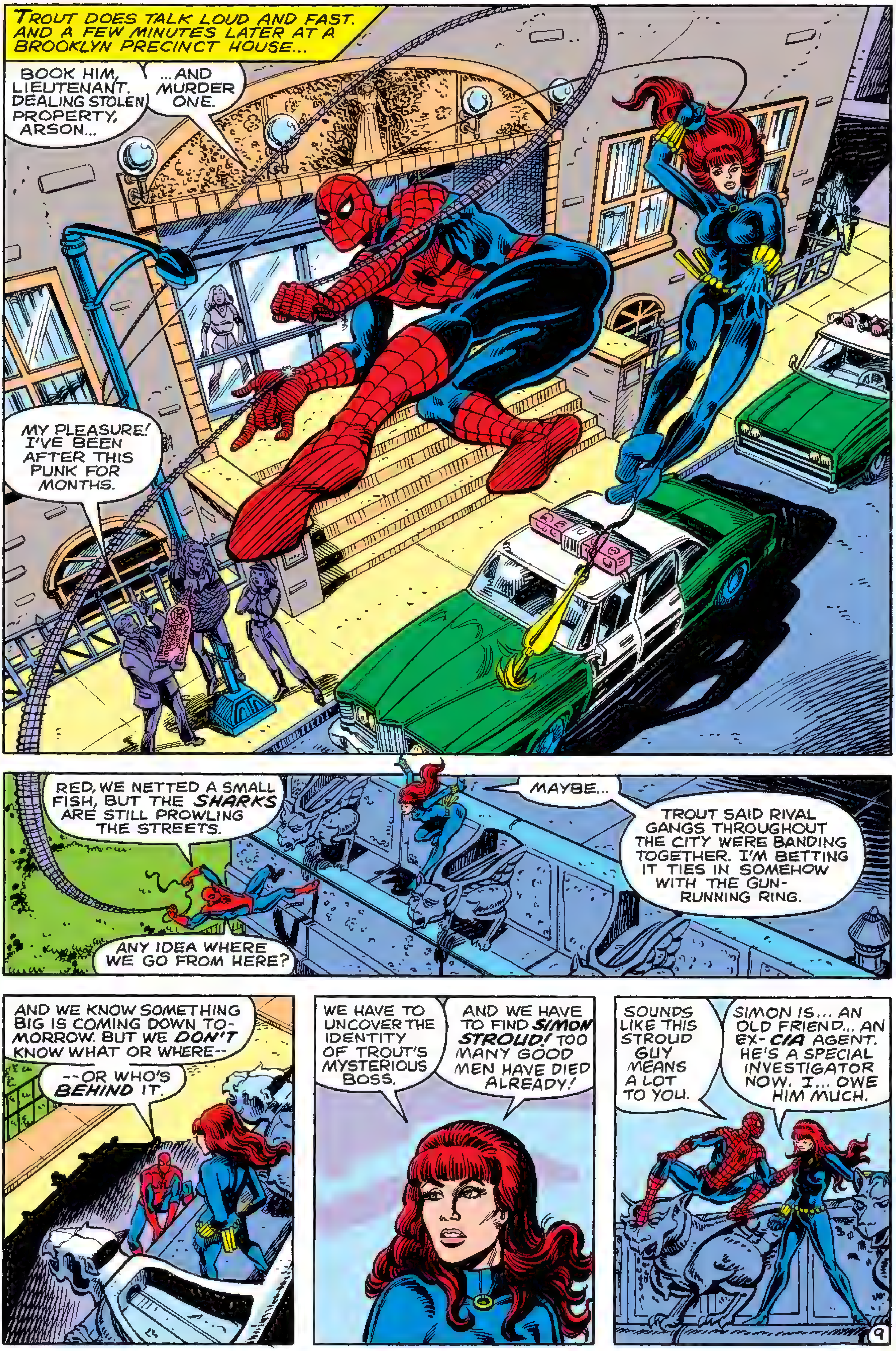

WAIT--! MY SPIDER-SENSE! SOMEONE'S--
BOO--!
YEOWWWW!
RED! YOU SCARED ME OUT OF A YEAR'S GROWTH!
THAT MAKES US EVEN.
YOU READY TO CRACK A MYSTERY?
THAT...
...AND A FEW JAWS.
OK. SIMON, TAKE THEM LOW.
CHECK.
READY, SPIDER-MAN?
TH-THE BLACK WIDOW!
EMPHATICALLY, LOVELY LADY!
SAY, THAT WIDOW'S BITE OF YOURS IS SOMETHING ELSE!
BUT DON'T FORGET, WHEN IT COMES TO ARACHNID ADVENTURERS, I WAS THE FIRST!
THWIP
O-OH, NO--! THAT CRATE! YOU WOULDN'T PULL IT DOWN ON ME... WOULD YOU...?
SPIDER-MAN, THIS ISN'T A CONTEST.
IT'S A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH.
NEED ANY HELP, SPIDER-MAN?
WELL, THANKS FOR THE OFFER, 'TASHA--

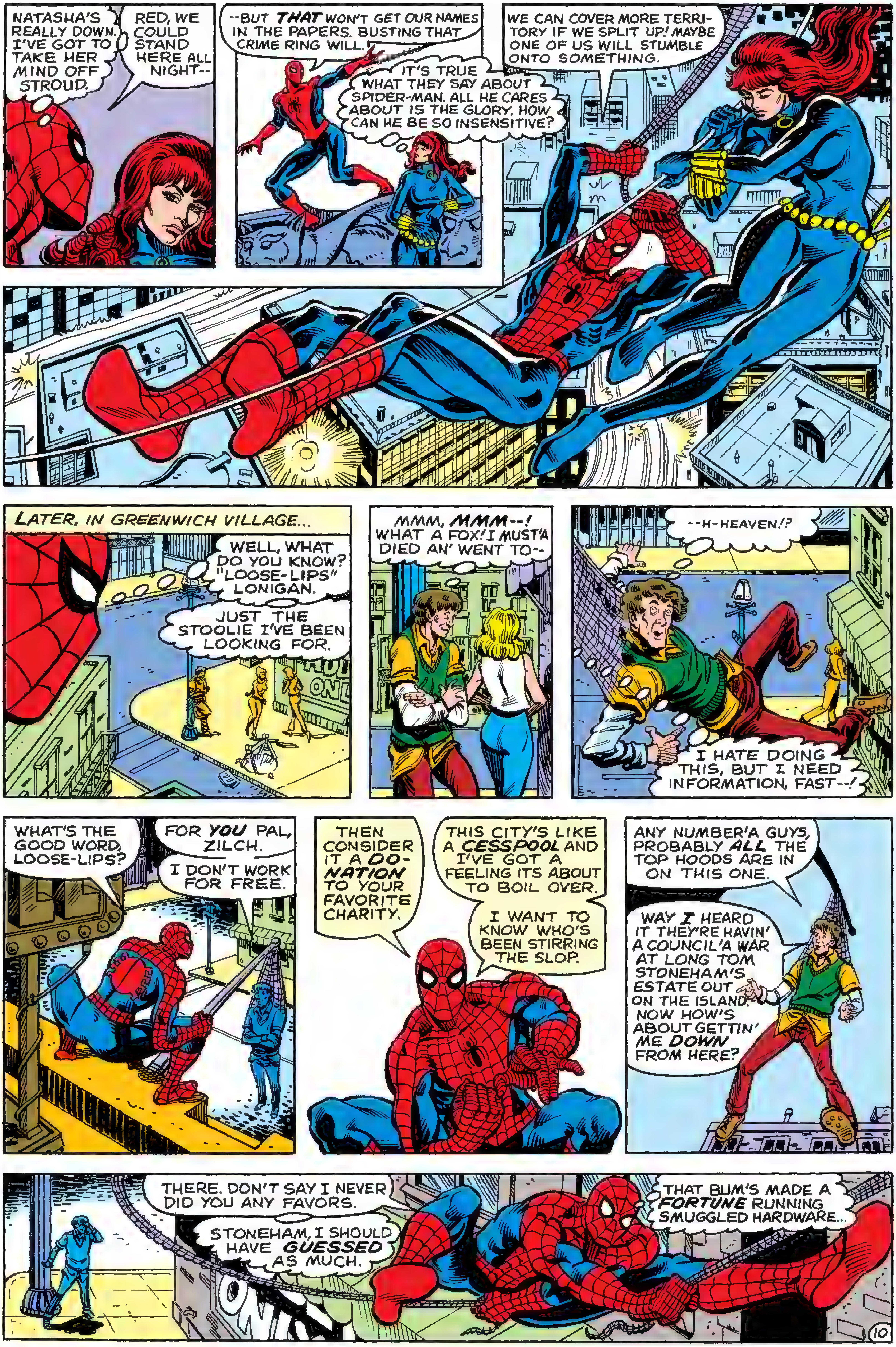

-- BUT THE DAY THIS L'IL SPIDER-MAN CAN'T HANDLE THESE JOY-BOYS, IS THE DAY PIGS LIVE IN TREES!
EVERYTHING'S GOING WRONG! EVERYTHING!
I DON'T KNOW HOW SPIDER-MAN AND THE WIDOW TUMBLED ONTO OUR SET-UP...
...BUT I DO KNOW THEY WON'T LEAVE HERE ALIVE!
SNIK
THEY CAN BOTH FRY FOR ALL I CARE!
'TASHA! SPIDER-MAN! LOOK OUT!
EXPLOSIVES
DANGER
GASOLINE
EH--? SPIDER-SENSE IS BLARING LIKE A FOUR-ALARM--
BAWHHHOM
--FIRE!?
WATCH IT, RED!
THE WORLD SEEMS EXPLODE, THEN, IN AN INFERNO OF BLINDING LIGHT AND HEAT.
AND DEATH.

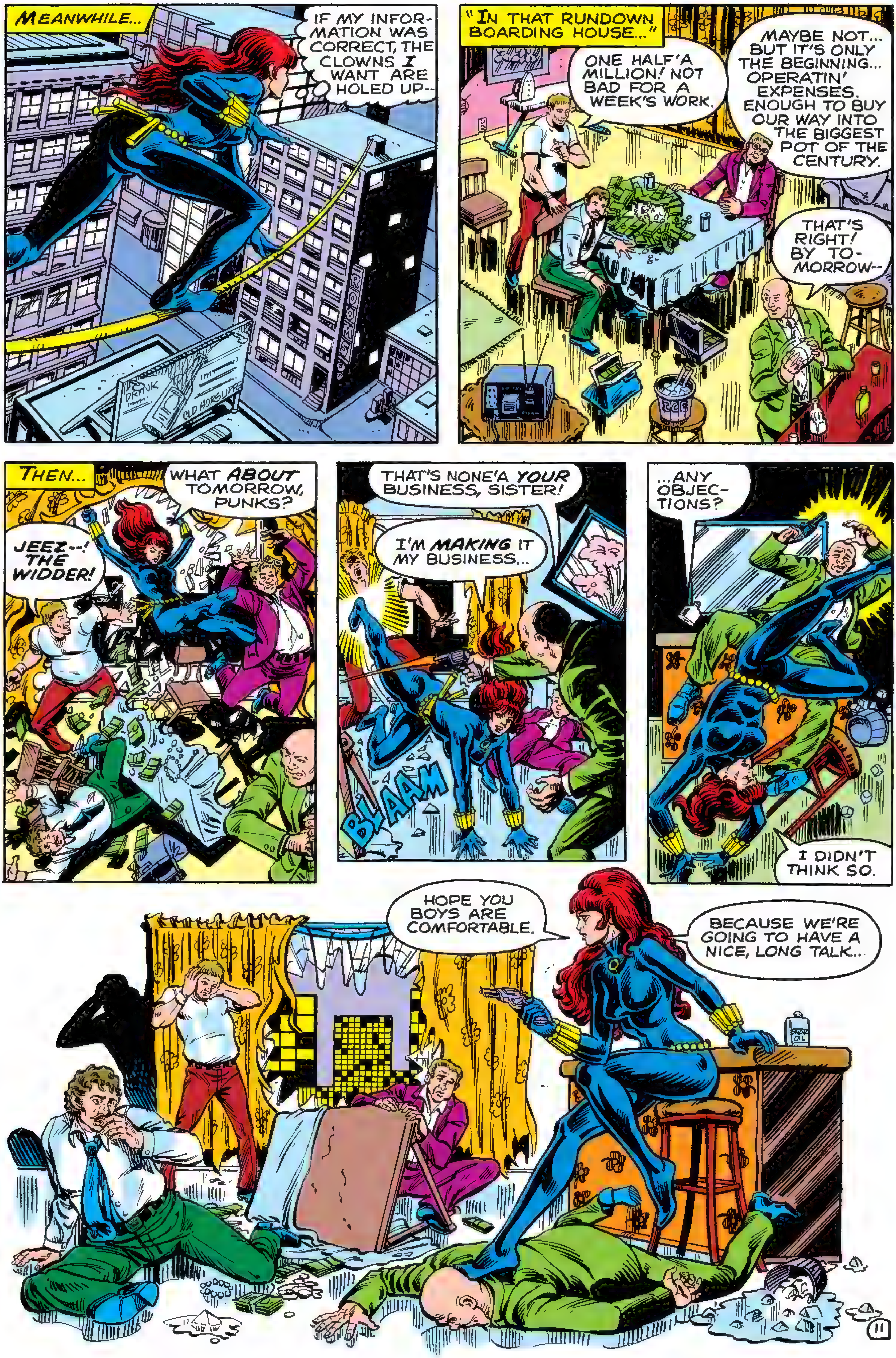

AND, OUTSIDE THE BLAZING WAREHOUSE...
WHAT THE--?! THE WHOLE PLACE JUST... JUST...
IF I'D BEEN IN THERE... LIKE THE OTHERS...
STEP ON IT, SAMMY! LET'S GET OUTTA HERE WHILE WE CAN!
I COULDN'T STOP THAT EXPLOSION, MURDERER...
...BUT I *CAN* STOP YOU...
...AND I WILL! IF YOU'VE HURT NATASHA, SO HELP ME, I'LL--
THE ONLY THING *YOU'RE* GONNA DO--
--IS DIE!
'CAUSE OL' CRICKET'S *ALWAYS* GOT A TRICK UP HIS SLEEVE!
POW
UNGHH--!
YOU JUST WINGED 'IM WITH THAT FANCY GUN'A YOURS, CRICKET. YOU WANT ME TO--
NO, WE MAY NEED A HOSTAGE.
SHOVE 'IM IN THE TRUNK WHILE *I* CALL THE BOSS ON THE CAR PHONE.
SO...
THAT'S WHAT I'M TRYIN' TO TELL YOU, BOSS. I SKRAGGED SPIDER-MAN AND THE BLACK WIDOW.
SURE I'M SURE. NOTHIN' HUMAN COULD'A LIVED THROUGH THAT.
BUT CRICKET MIGHT NOT BE QUITE SO SURE IF HE COULD PEER THROUGH THE SMOKE AND FLAMES...
...TO A LARGE GREY TANGLE OF WEBBING SECURED TO A FAR WALL OF THE FIRE-WRAPPED WAREHOUSE...
THAT WAS CLOSE... TOO CLOSE. THE EXPLOSION STUNNED NATASHA AND IF NOT FOR THIS WEB COCOON I THREW AROUND US...
STILL, IT'S GETTING AWFULLY *HOT* IN HERE. WEBS OR NOT, WE'VE HAD IT...

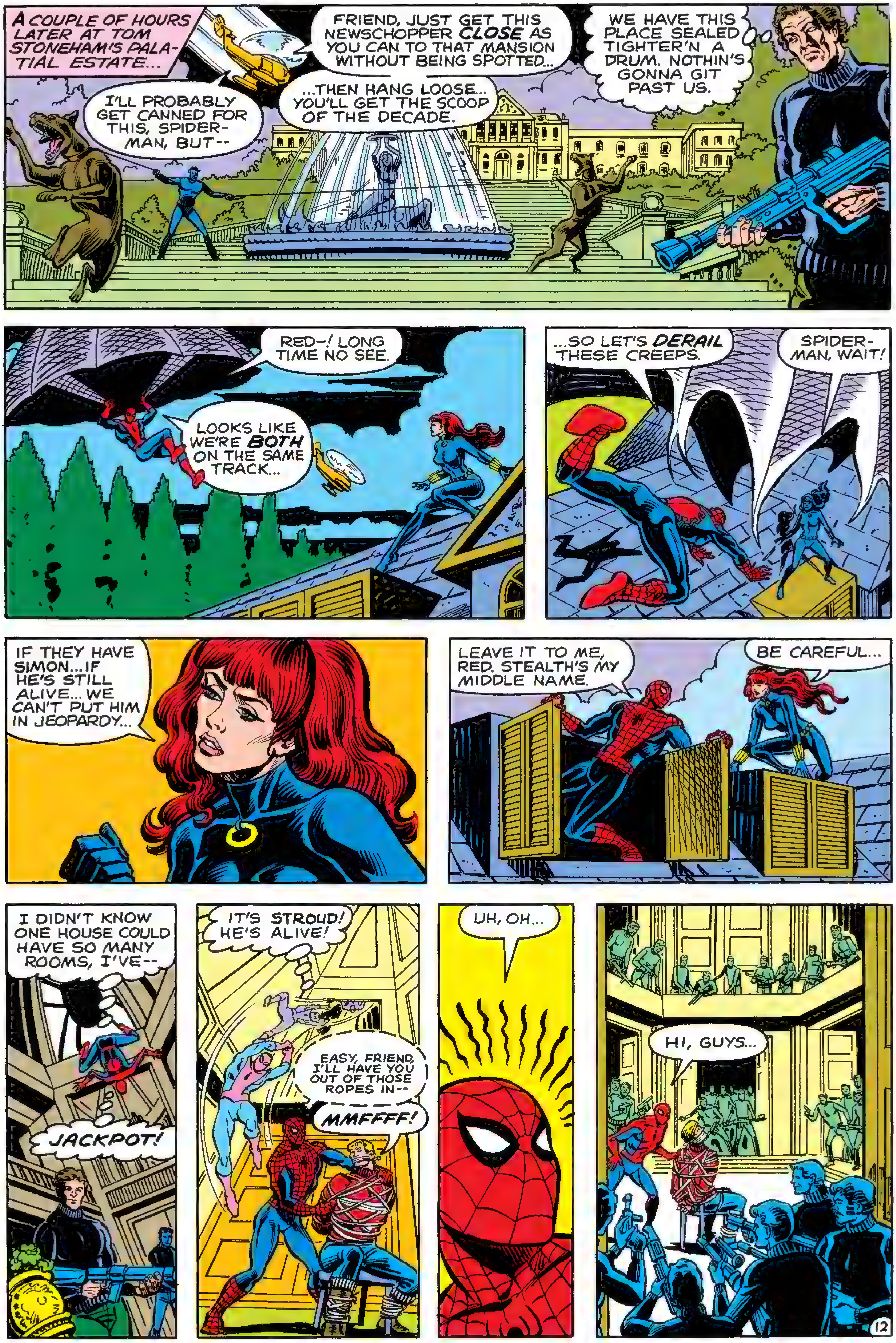

...UNLESS...
WHEW--! THE PROPORTIONATE STRENGTH OF A SPIDER SURE COMES IN HANDY FOR SMASHING THROUGH WALLS.
KA-RESSH
OHHHH...
EASY, RED.
THE NIGHT AIR'S REVIVING HER.
SPIDER-MAN... WHAT... WHAT HAPPENED...?
THERE WAS AN EXPLOSION. EVERYTHING WENT UP IN FLAMES--
EXCEPT THIS CRUD. NAME'S TROUT!
EXPLOSION?
SIMON!
THE WIDOW LUNGES FORWARD...
...ONLY TO BE STOPPED BY...
A SPIDER'S WEB!
SPIDER-MAN, ARE YOU INSANE? SIMON COULD BE HURT, OR...OR...
I HAVE TO FIND HIM...
THEN COOL OFF AND LISTEN TO REASON! LAST TIME I SAW HIM HE WAS HEADING THAT WAY!
THEN HE WASN'T IN THE WAREHOUSE WHEN--
WAIT A MINUTE!
WHAT'S THAT?
IT LOOKS LIKE BLOOD...
A TRAIL OF BLOOD.
IT MUST BE SIMON'S.
THEY HAVE HIM, SPIDER-MAN. I CAN FEEL IT.
SOMEHOW... SOME WAY... I'M GOING TO TRACK THEM DOWN. AND WHEN I DO...
LISTEN, RED, I'VE GOT AN IDEA...

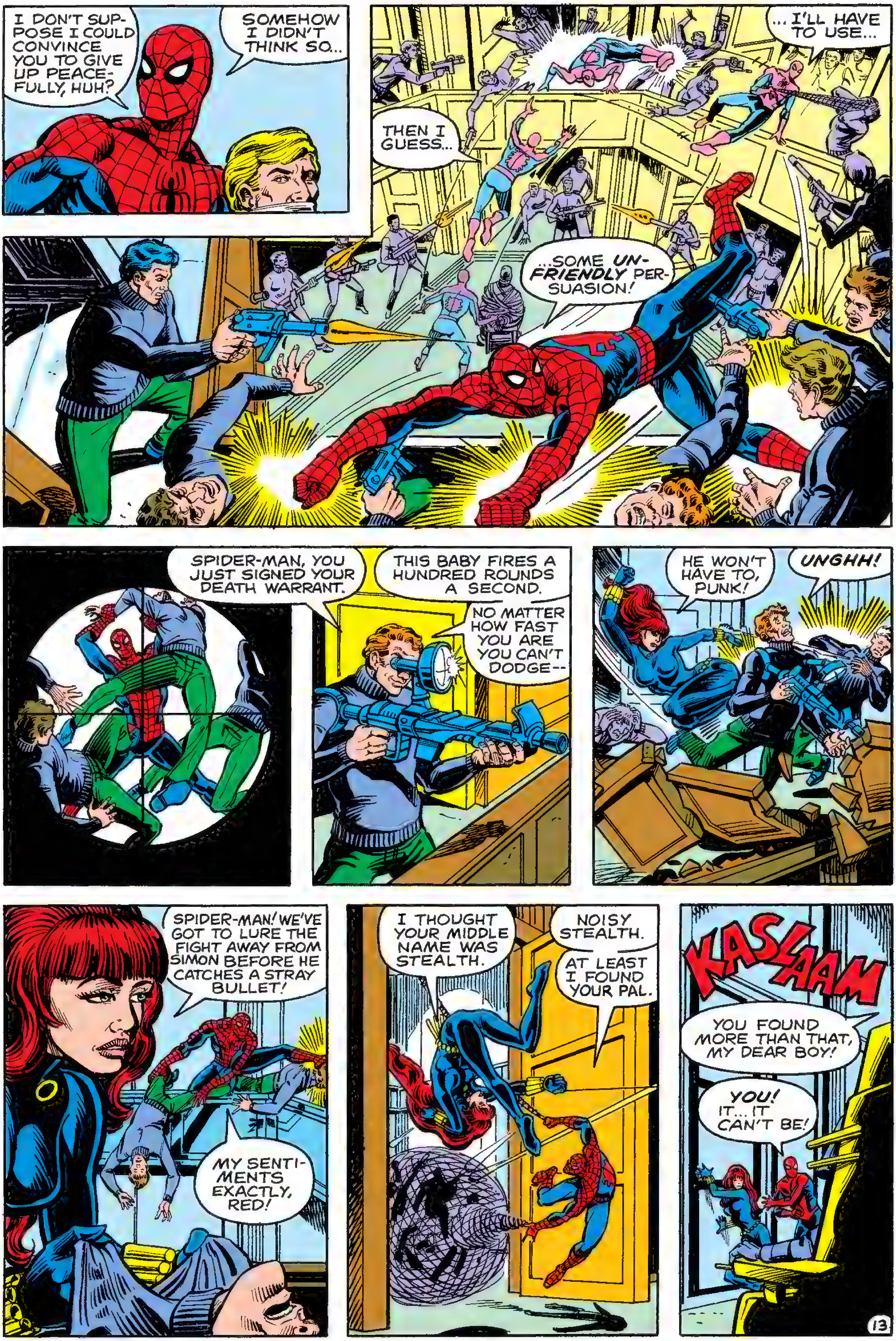

So...
WAKE UP, TROUT.
HUH--? WHAT THE--?
WH-WHERE AM I--?
ON TOP OF THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE.
HIGH, ISN'T IT?
I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU'D CARE TO TALK?
N-NO... I CAN'T... THE BOSS'D KILL ME IF HE KNEW I'D SQUEALED...
AWWW... WOULD HE REALLY?
STOP JOKIN'
THEN YOU START TALKING!
SNAP
C'MON, TROUTY-- THIS WEBBING WON'T LAST FOREVER.
COURSE, IT WON'T HAVE TO--
--IF YOU CAN FLY!
LAST CHANCE, BUNKY.
ALL RIGHT! I--I'LL TALK! ANYTHING YOU WANT!
J-JUST GET ME DOWN!

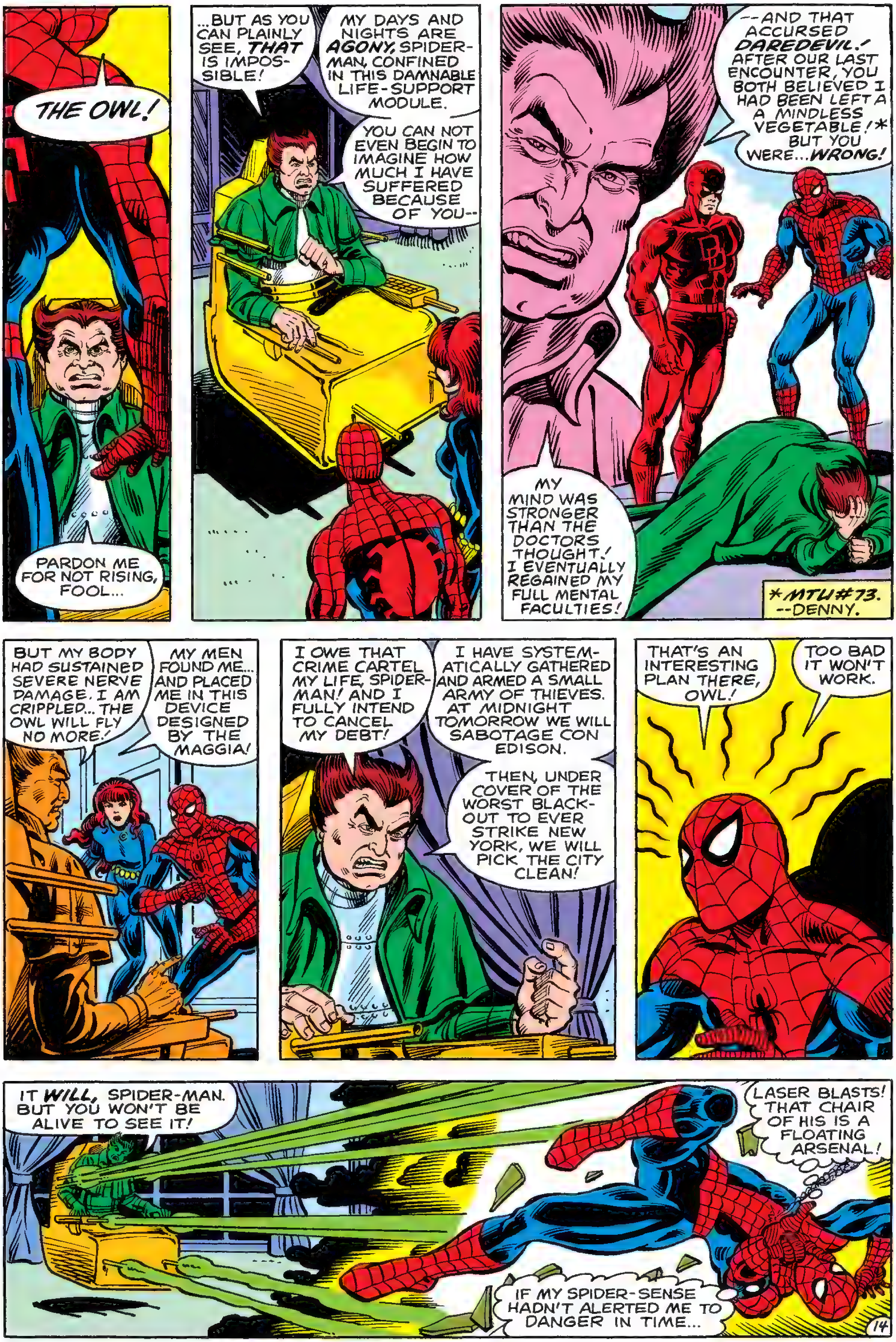

TROUT DOES TALK LOUD AND FAST. AND A FEW MINUTES LATER AT A BROOKLYN PRECINCT HOUSE...
BOOK HIM, LIEUTENANT. DEALING STOLEN PROPERTY, ARSON...
...AND MURDER ONE.
MY PLEASURE! I'VE BEEN AFTER THIS PUNK FOR MONTHS.
RED, WE NETTED A SMALL FISH, BUT THE SHARKS ARE STILL PROWLING THE STREETS.
ANY IDEA WHERE WE GO FROM HERE?
MAYBE...
TROUT SAID RIVAL GANGS THROUGHOUT THE CITY WERE BANDING TOGETHER. I'M BETTING IT TIES IN SOMEHOW WITH THE GUN-RUNNING RING.
AND WE KNOW SOMETHING BIG IS COMING DOWN TOMORROW. BUT WE DON'T KNOW WHAT OR WHERE--
--OR WHO'S BEHIND IT.
WE HAVE TO UNCOVER THE IDENTITY OF TROUT'S MYSTERIOUS BOSS.
AND WE HAVE TO FIND SIMON STROUD! TOO MANY GOOD MEN HAVE DIED ALREADY!
SOUNDS LIKE THIS STROUD GUY MEANS A LOT TO YOU.
SIMON IS... AN OLD FRIEND... AN EX-CIA AGENT. HE'S A SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR NOW. I... OWE HIM MUCH.

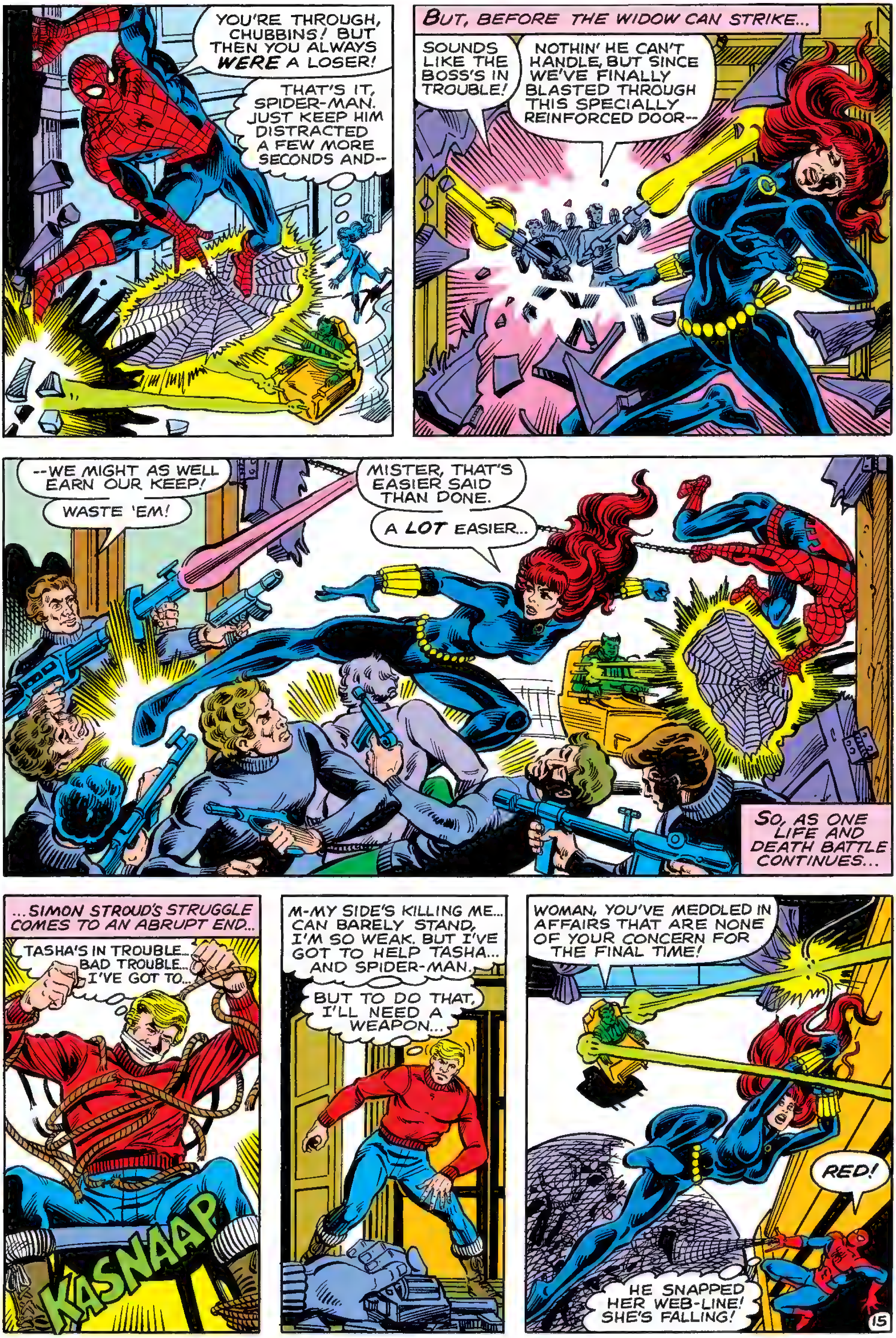

NATASHA'S REALLY DOWN. I'VE GOT TO TAKE HER MIND OFF STROUD.
RED, WE COULD STAND HERE ALL NIGHT--
--BUT THAT WON'T GET OUR NAMES IN THE PAPERS. BUSTING THAT CRIME RING WILL.
IT'S TRUE WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT SPIDER-MAN. ALL HE CARES ABOUT IS THE GLORY. HOW CAN HE BE SO INSENSITIVE?
WE CAN COVER MORE TERRITORY IF WE SPLIT UP! MAYBE ONE OF US WILL STUMBLE ONTO SOMETHING.
LATER, IN GREENWICH VILLAGE...
WELL, WHAT DO YOU KNOW? "LOOSE-LIPS" LONIGAN.
JUST THE STOOLIE I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR.
MMM, MMM--! WHAT A FOX! I MUST'A DIED AN' WENT TO--
--H-HEAVEN!?
I HATE DOING THIS, BUT I NEED INFORMATION, FAST--!
WHAT'S THE GOOD WORD, LOOSE-LIPS?
FOR YOU PAL, ZILCH.
I DON'T WORK FOR FREE.
THEN CONSIDER IT A DONATION TO YOUR FAVORITE CHARITY.
THIS CITY'S LIKE A CESSPOOL AND I'VE GOT A FEELING ITS ABOUT TO BOIL OVER.
I WANT TO KNOW WHO'S BEEN STIRRING THE SLOP.
ANY NUMBER'A GUYS, PROBABLY ALL THE TOP HOODS ARE IN ON THIS ONE.
WAY I HEARD IT THEY'RE HAVIN' A COUNCIL'A WAR AT LONG TOM STONEHAM'S ESTATE OUT ON THE ISLAND. NOW HOW'S ABOUT GETTIN' ME DOWN FROM HERE?
THERE. DON'T SAY I NEVER DID YOU ANY FAVORS.
STONEHAM, I SHOULD HAVE GUESSED AS MUCH.
THAT BUM'S MADE A FORTUNE RUNNING SMUGGLED HARDWARE...

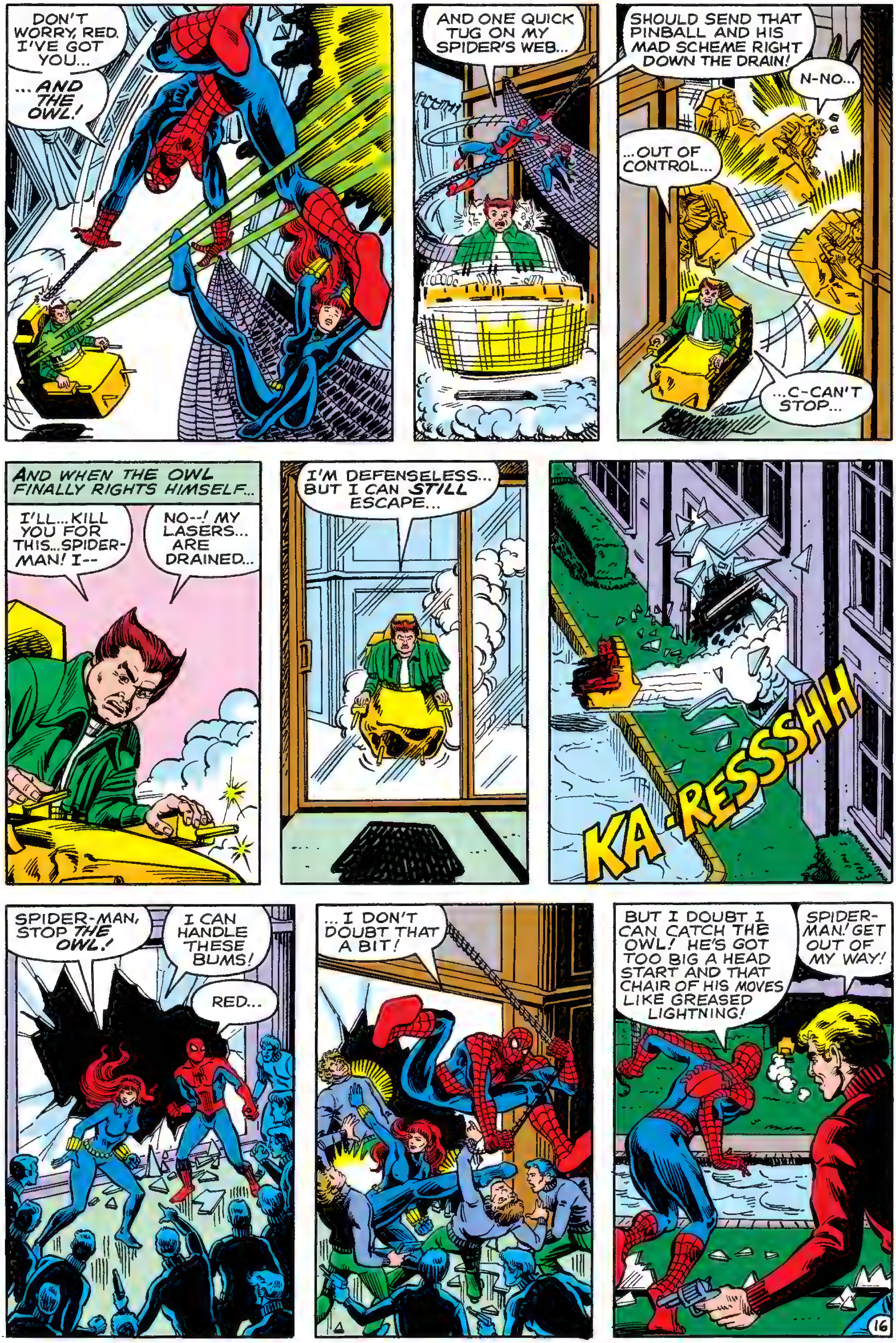

MEANWHILE...
IF MY INFORMATION WAS CORRECT, THE CLOWNS I WANT ARE HOLED UP--
DRINK
OLD HORSLIPPER
ROOMS
"IN THAT RUNDOWN BOARDING HOUSE..."
ONE HALF'A MILLION! NOT BAD FOR A WEEK'S WORK.
MAYBE NOT... BUT IT'S ONLY THE BEGINNING... OPERATIN' EXPENSES. ENOUGH TO BUY OUR WAY INTO THE BIGGEST POT OF THE CENTURY.
THAT'S RIGHT! BY TOMORROW--
ICE
THEN...
WHAT ABOUT TOMORROW, PUNKS?
JEEZ--! THE WIDDER!
THAT'S NONE'A YOUR BUSINESS, SISTER!
I'M MAKING IT MY BUSINESS...
BLAAM
...ANY OBJECTIONS?
I DIDN'T THINK SO.
HOPE YOU BOYS ARE COMFORTABLE.
BECAUSE WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A NICE, LONG TALK...

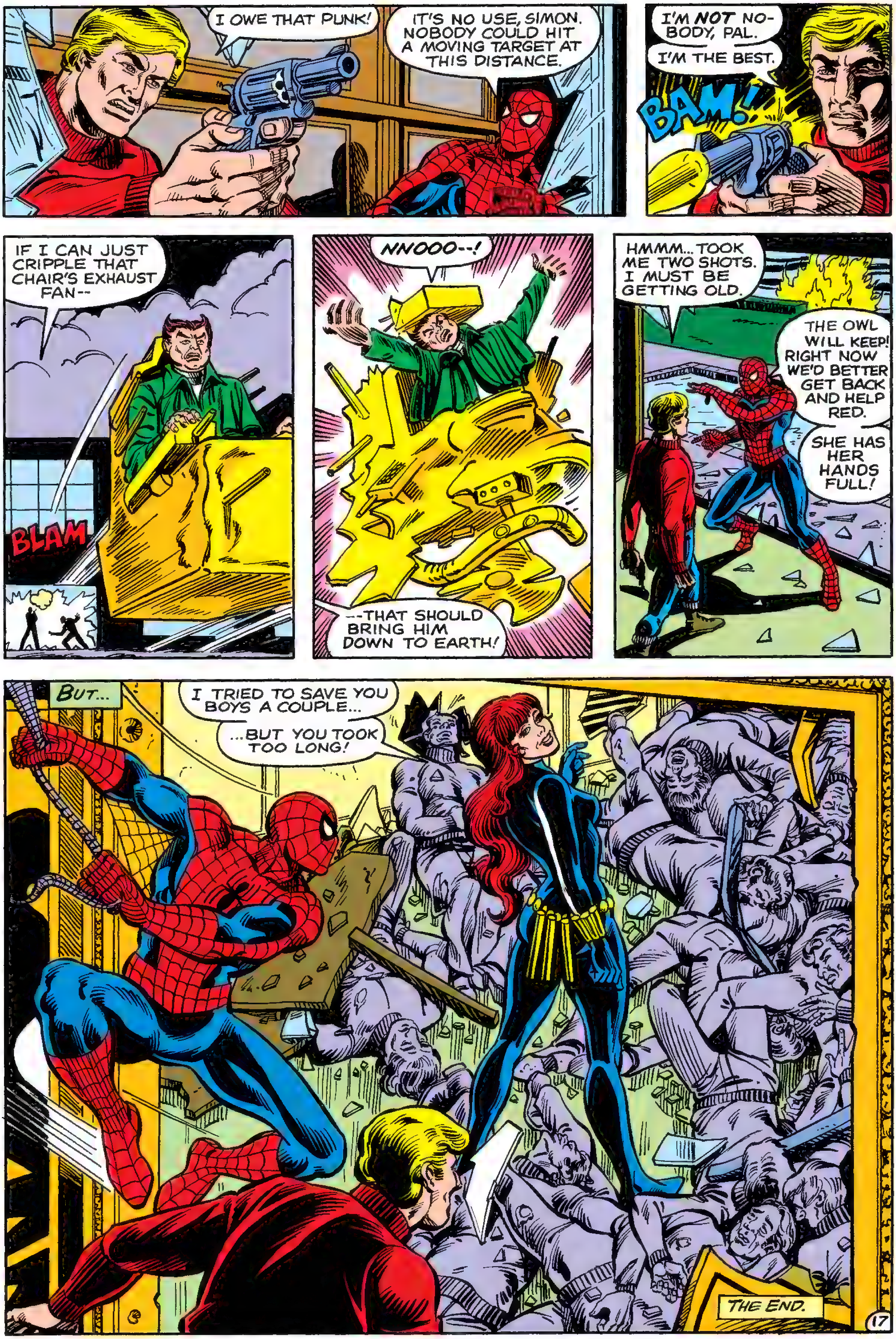

A COUPLE OF HOURS LATER AT TOM STONEHAM'S PALATIAL ESTATE...
FRIEND, JUST GET THIS NEWSCHOPPER CLOSE AS YOU CAN TO THAT MANSION WITHOUT BEING SPOTTED...
...THEN HANG LOOSE... YOU'LL GET THE SCOOP OF THE DECADE.
I'LL PROBABLY GET CANNED FOR THIS, SPIDER-MAN, BUT--
WE HAVE THIS PLACE SEALED TIGHTER'N A DRUM. NOTHIN'S GONNA GIT PAST US.
RED--! LONG TIME NO SEE.
LOOKS LIKE WE'RE BOTH ON THE SAME TRACK...
...SO LET'S DERAIL THESE CREEPS.
SPIDER-MAN, WAIT!
IF THEY HAVE SIMON...IF HE'S STILL ALIVE... WE CAN'T PUT HIM IN JEOPARDY...
LEAVE IT TO ME, RED. STEALTH'S MY MIDDLE NAME.
BE CAREFUL...
I DIDN'T KNOW ONE HOUSE COULD HAVE SO MANY ROOMS, I'VE--
JACKPOT!
IT'S STROUD! HE'S ALIVE!
EASY, FRIEND, I'LL HAVE YOU OUT OF THOSE ROPES IN--
MMFFFF!
UH, OH...
HI, GUYS...


I DON'T SUPPOSE I COULD CONVINCE YOU TO GIVE UP PEACEFULLY, HUH?
SOMEHOW I DIDN'T THINK SO...
...I'LL HAVE TO USE...
THEN I GUESS...
...SOME *UNFRIENDLY* PERSUASION!
SPIDER-MAN, YOU JUST SIGNED YOUR DEATH WARRANT.
THIS BABY FIRES A HUNDRED ROUNDS A SECOND.
NO MATTER HOW FAST YOU ARE YOU CAN'T DODGE--
HE WON'T HAVE TO, PUNK!
UNGHH!
SPIDER-MAN! WE'VE GOT TO LURE THE FIGHT AWAY FROM SIMON BEFORE HE CATCHES A STRAY BULLET!
MY SENTIMENTS EXACTLY, RED!
I THOUGHT YOUR MIDDLE NAME WAS STEALTH.
NOISY STEALTH.
AT LEAST I FOUND YOUR PAL.
KASLAAM
YOU FOUND MORE THAN THAT, MY DEAR BOY!
YOU! IT... IT CAN'T BE!


THE OWL!
PARDON ME FOR NOT RISING, FOOL...
...BUT AS YOU CAN PLAINLY SEE, *THAT* IS IMPOSSIBLE!
MY DAYS AND NIGHTS ARE *AGONY,* SPIDER-MAN, CONFINED IN THIS DAMNABLE LIFE-SUPPORT MODULE.
YOU CAN NOT EVEN BEGIN TO IMAGINE HOW MUCH I HAVE SUFFERED BECAUSE OF YOU--
--AND THAT ACCURSED *DAREDEVIL!* AFTER OUR LAST ENCOUNTER, YOU BOTH BELIEVED I HAD BEEN LEFT A A MINDLESS VEGETABLE!* BUT YOU WERE...*WRONG!*
MY MIND WAS STRONGER THAN THE DOCTORS THOUGHT! I EVENTUALLY REGAINED MY FULL MENTAL FACULTIES!
**MTU #73.* --DENNY.
BUT MY BODY HAD SUSTAINED SEVERE NERVE DAMAGE. I AM CRIPPLED... THE OWL WILL FLY NO MORE!
MY MEN FOUND ME... AND PLACED ME IN THIS DEVICE DESIGNED BY THE MAGGIA!
I OWE THAT CRIME CARTEL MY LIFE, SPIDER-MAN! AND I FULLY INTEND TO CANCEL MY DEBT!
I HAVE SYSTEMATICALLY GATHERED AND ARMED A SMALL ARMY OF THIEVES. AT MIDNIGHT TOMORROW WE WILL SABOTAGE CON EDISON.
THEN, UNDER COVER OF THE WORST BLACKOUT TO EVER STRIKE NEW YORK, WE WILL PICK THE CITY CLEAN!
THAT'S AN INTERESTING PLAN THERE, OWL!
TOO BAD IT WON'T WORK.
IT *WILL,* SPIDER-MAN. BUT YOU WON'T BE ALIVE TO SEE IT!
LASER BLASTS! THAT CHAIR OF HIS IS A FLOATING ARSENAL!
IF MY SPIDER-SENSE HADN'T ALERTED ME TO DANGER IN TIME...


YOU'RE THROUGH, CHUBBINS! BUT THEN YOU ALWAYS **WERE** A LOSER!
THAT'S IT, SPIDER-MAN. JUST KEEP HIM DISTRACTED A FEW MORE SECONDS AND--
BUT, BEFORE THE WIDOW CAN STRIKE...
SOUNDS LIKE THE BOSS'S IN TROUBLE!
NOTHIN' HE CAN'T HANDLE, BUT SINCE WE'VE FINALLY BLASTED THROUGH THIS SPECIALLY REINFORCED DOOR--
--WE MIGHT AS WELL EARN OUR KEEP!
WASTE 'EM!
MISTER, THAT'S EASIER SAID THAN DONE.
A ***LOT*** EASIER...
SO, AS ONE LIFE AND DEATH BATTLE CONTINUES...
...SIMON STROUD'S STRUGGLE COMES TO AN ABRUPT END...
TASHA'S IN TROUBLE... BAD TROUBLE... I'VE GOT TO...
KASNAAP
M-MY SIDE'S KILLING ME... CAN BARELY STAND, I'M SO WEAK. BUT I'VE GOT TO HELP TASHA... AND SPIDER-MAN.
BUT TO DO THAT, I'LL NEED A WEAPON...
WOMAN, YOU'VE MEDDLED IN AFFAIRS THAT ARE NONE OF YOUR CONCERN FOR THE FINAL TIME!
RED!
HE SNAPPED HER WEB-LINE! SHE'S FALLING!


DON'T WORRY, RED. I'VE GOT YOU...
... AND THE OWL!
AND ONE QUICK TUG ON MY SPIDER'S WEB...
SHOULD SEND THAT PINBALL AND HIS MAD SCHEME RIGHT DOWN THE DRAIN!
N-NO...
...OUT OF CONTROL...
...C-CAN'T STOP...
AND WHEN THE OWL FINALLY RIGHTS HIMSELF...
I'LL...KILL YOU FOR THIS...SPIDER-MAN! I--
NO--! MY LASERS... ARE DRAINED...
I'M DEFENSELESS... BUT I CAN STILL ESCAPE...
KA-RESSSHH
SPIDER-MAN, STOP THE OWL!
I CAN HANDLE THESE BUMS!
RED...
...I DON'T DOUBT THAT A BIT!
BUT I DOUBT I CAN CATCH THE OWL! HE'S GOT TOO BIG A HEAD START AND THAT CHAIR OF HIS MOVES LIKE GREASED LIGHTNING!
SPIDER-MAN! GET OUT OF MY WAY!


I OWE THAT PUNK!
IT'S NO USE, SIMON. NOBODY COULD HIT A MOVING TARGET AT THIS DISTANCE.
I'M NOT NOBODY, PAL.
I'M THE BEST.
BAM!
IF I CAN JUST CRIPPLE THAT CHAIR'S EXHAUST FAN--
BLAM
NNOOO--!
--THAT SHOULD BRING HIM DOWN TO EARTH!
HMMM... TOOK ME TWO SHOTS. I MUST BE GETTING OLD.
THE OWL WILL KEEP! RIGHT NOW WE'D BETTER GET BACK AND HELP RED.
SHE HAS HER HANDS FULL!
BUT...
I TRIED TO SAVE YOU BOYS A COUPLE...
...BUT YOU TOOK TOO LONG!
THE END.

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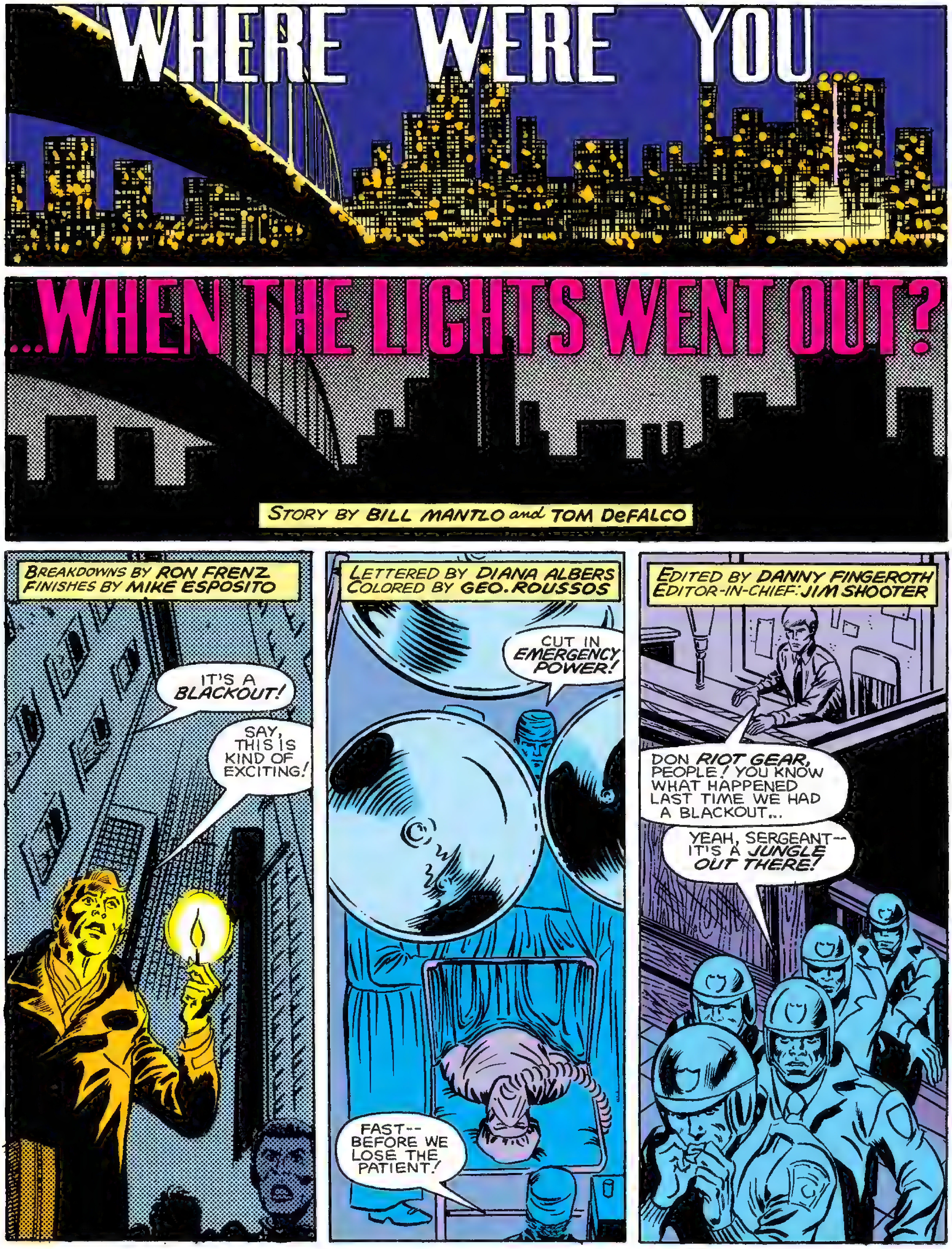
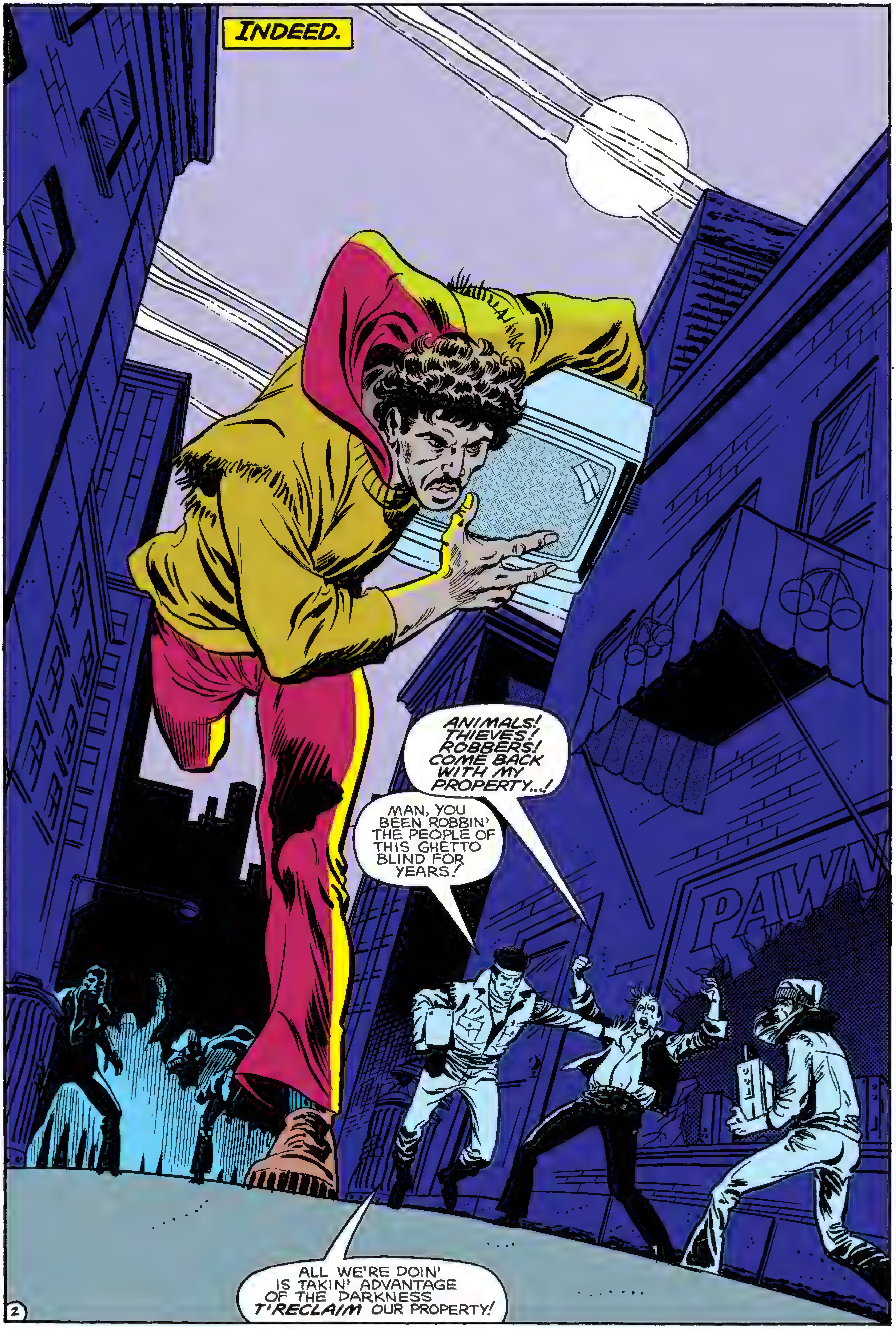
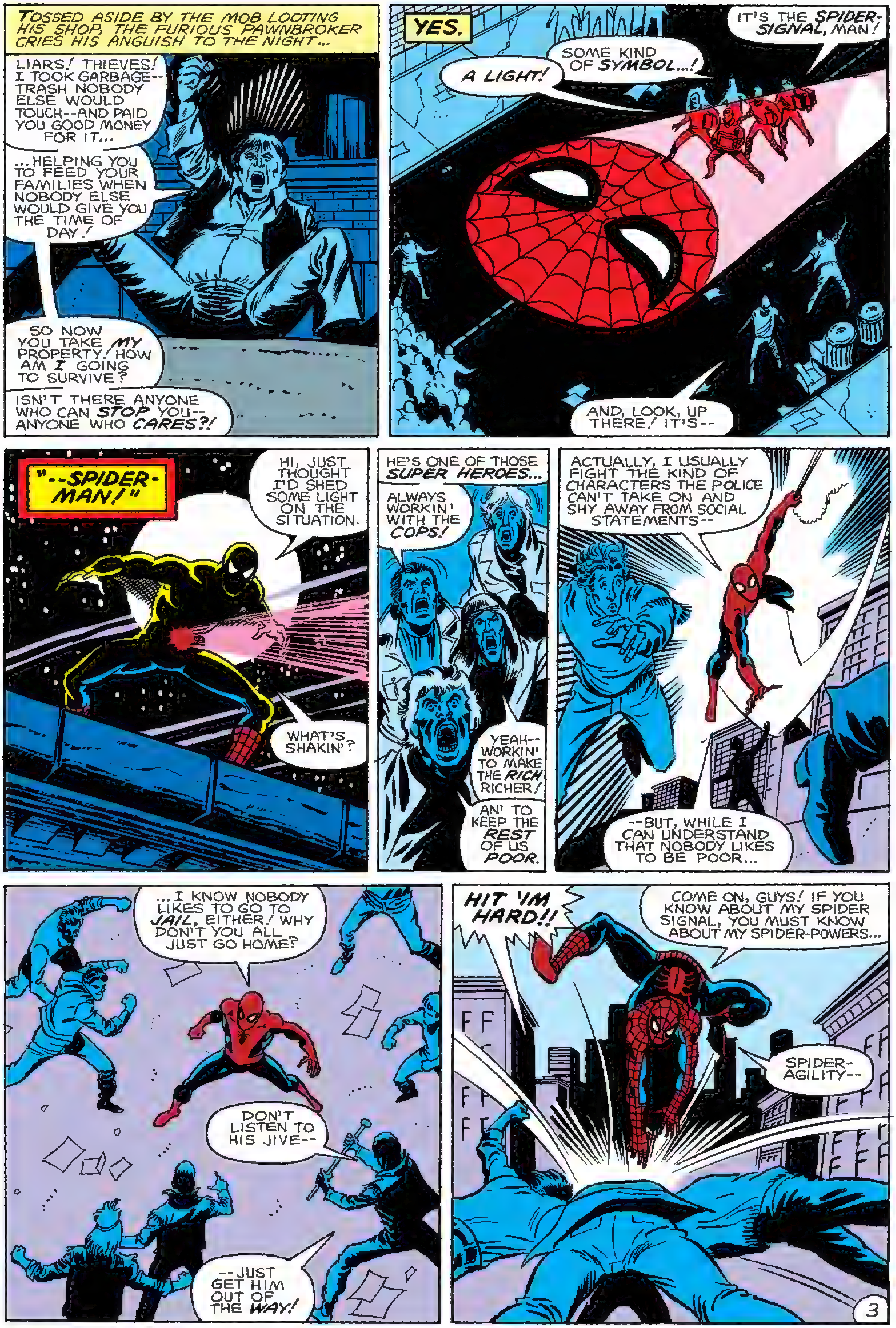
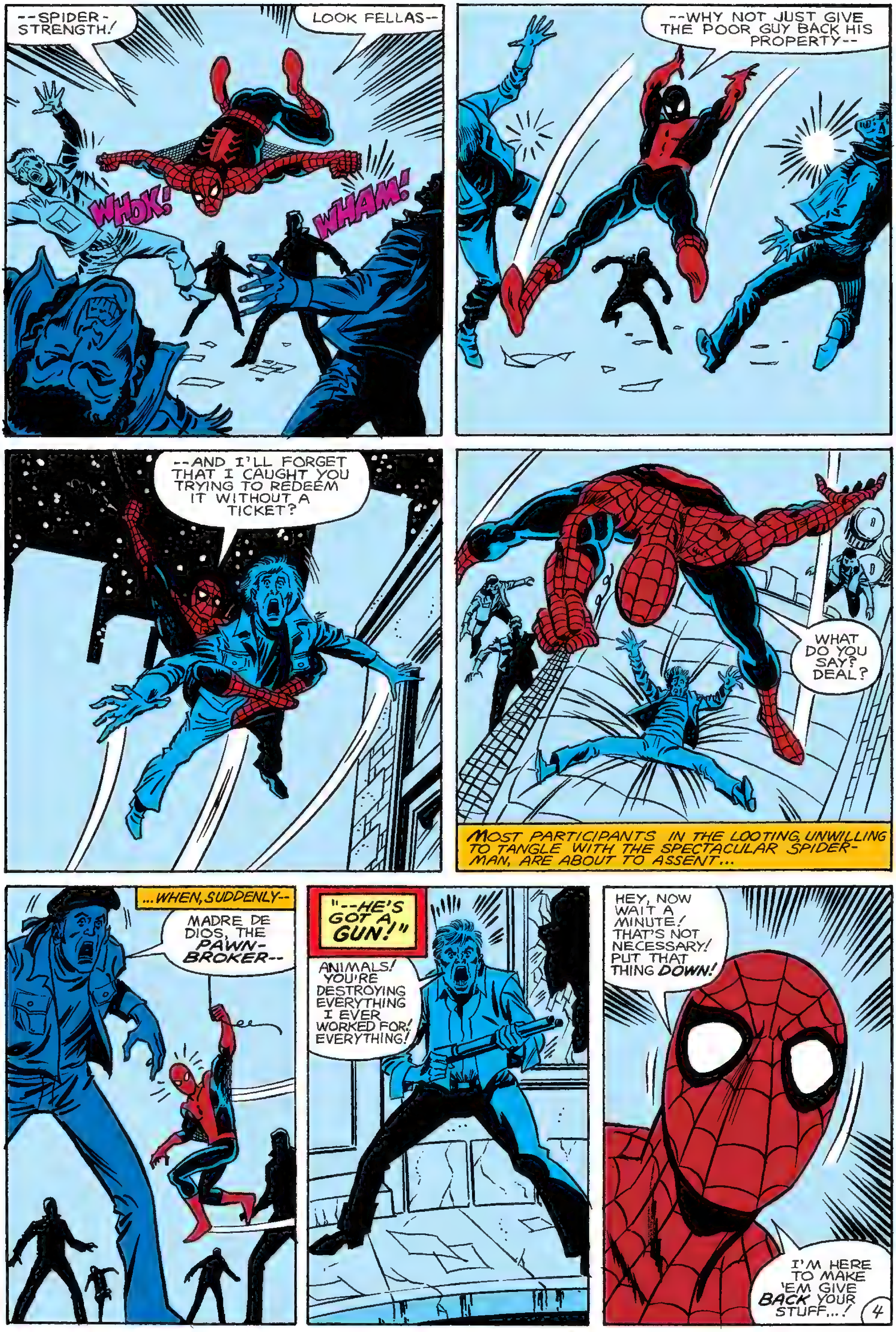
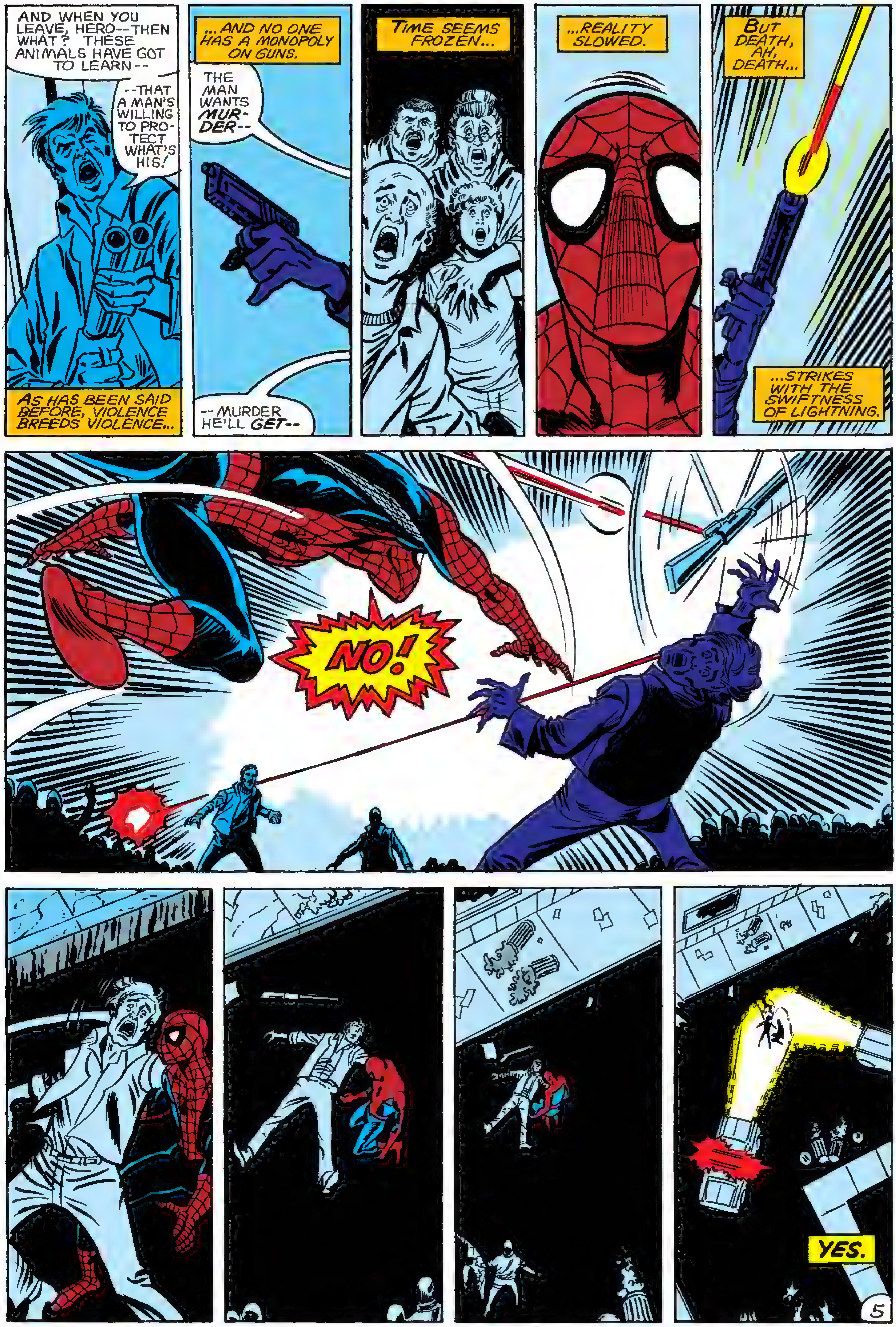
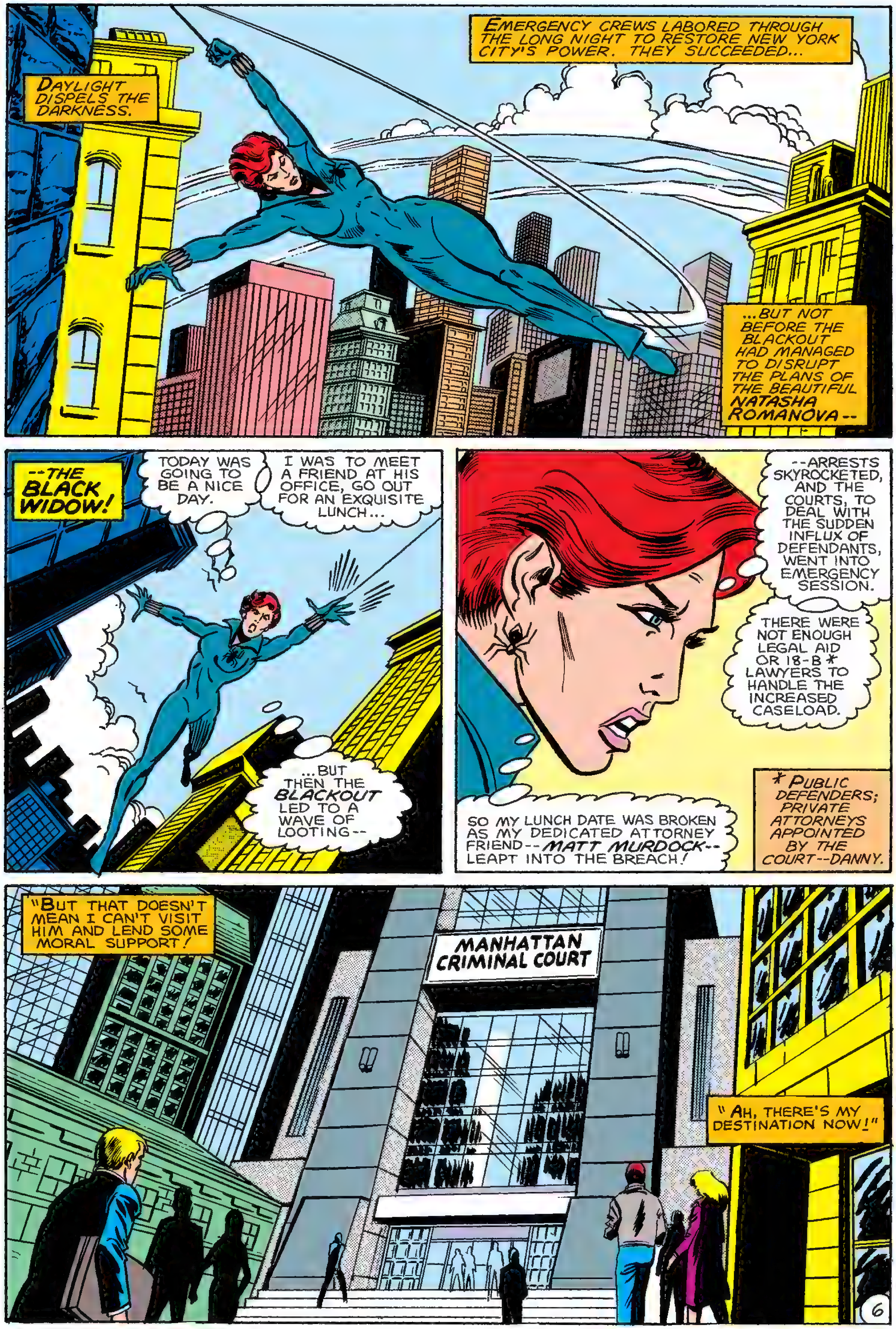

WHERE WERE YOU
...WHEN THE LIGHTS WENT OUT?
STORY BY BILL MANTLO and TOM DeFALCO
BREAKDOWNS BY RON FRENZ
FINISHES BY MIKE ESPOSITO
IT'S A BLACKOUT!
SAY, THIS IS KIND OF EXCITING!
LETTERED BY DIANA ALBERS
COLORED BY GEO. ROUSSOS
CUT IN EMERGENCY POWER!
FAST-- BEFORE WE LOSE THE PATIENT!
EDITED BY DANNY FINGEROTH
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: JIM SHOOTER
DON RIOT GEAR, PEOPLE! YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED LAST TIME WE HAD A BLACKOUT...
YEAH, SERGEANT-- IT'S A JUNGLE OUT THERE!

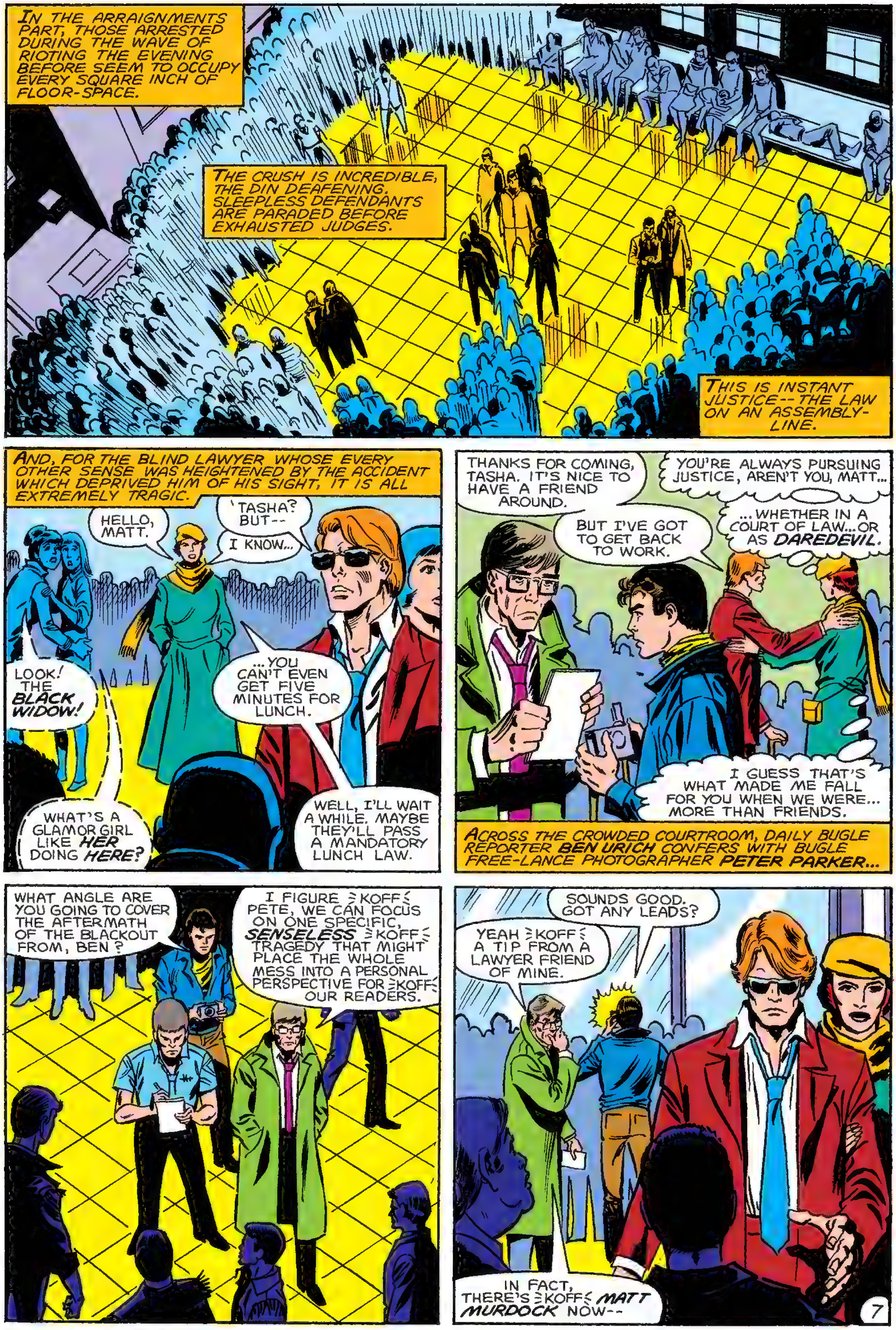

INDEED.
ANIMALS! THIEVES! ROBBERS! COME BACK WITH MY PROPERTY...!
MAN, YOU BEEN ROBBIN' THE PEOPLE OF THIS GHETTO BLIND FOR YEARS!
ALL WE'RE DOIN' IS TAKIN' ADVANTAGE OF THE DARKNESS *T'RECLAIM* OUR PROPERTY!
PAWN
2

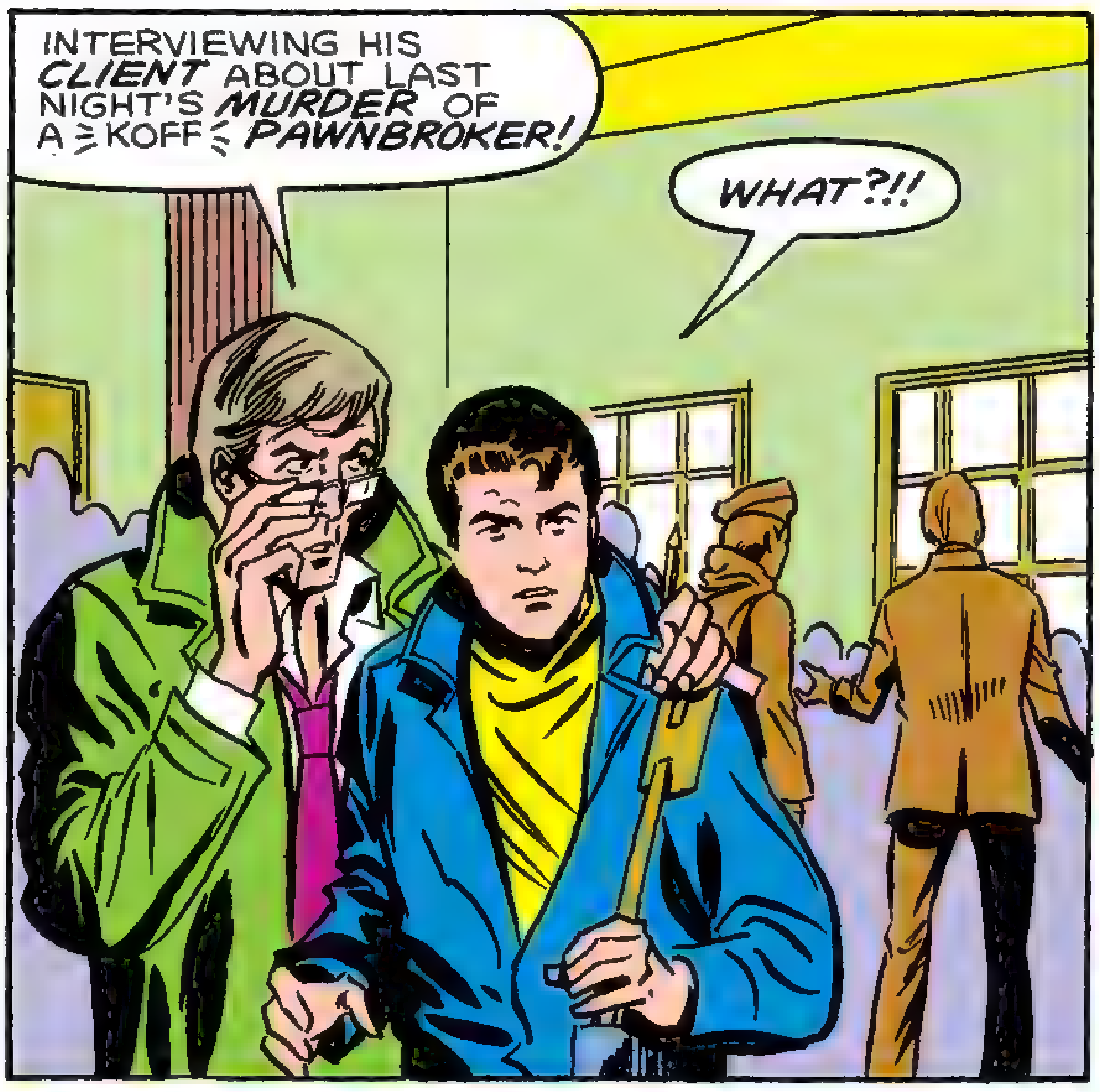

TOSSED ASIDE BY THE MOB LOOTING HIS SHOP, THE FURIOUS PAWNBROKER CRIES HIS ANGUISH TO THE NIGHT...
LIARS! THIEVES! I TOOK GARBAGE--TRASH NOBODY ELSE WOULD TOUCH--AND PAID YOU GOOD MONEY FOR IT...
...HELPING YOU TO FEED YOUR FAMILIES WHEN NOBODY ELSE WOULD GIVE YOU THE TIME OF DAY!
SO NOW YOU TAKE MY PROPERTY! HOW AM I GOING TO SURVIVE?
ISN'T THERE ANYONE WHO CAN STOP YOU--ANYONE WHO CARES?!
YES.
A LIGHT!
SOME KIND OF SYMBOL...!
IT'S THE SPIDER-SIGNAL, MAN!
AND, LOOK, UP THERE! IT'S--
"--SPIDER-MAN!"
HI, JUST THOUGHT I'D SHED SOME LIGHT ON THE SITUATION.
WHAT'S SHAKIN'?
HE'S ONE OF THOSE SUPER HEROES...
ALWAYS WORKIN' WITH THE COPS!
YEAH--WORKIN' TO MAKE THE RICH RICHER!
AN' TO KEEP THE REST OF US POOR.
ACTUALLY, I USUALLY FIGHT THE KIND OF CHARACTERS THE POLICE CAN'T TAKE ON AND SHY AWAY FROM SOCIAL STATEMENTS--
--BUT, WHILE I CAN UNDERSTAND THAT NOBODY LIKES TO BE POOR...
...I KNOW NOBODY LIKES TO GO TO JAIL, EITHER! WHY DON'T YOU ALL JUST GO HOME?
DON'T LISTEN TO HIS JIVE--
--JUST GET HIM OUT OF THE WAY!
HIT 'IM HARD!!
COME ON, GUYS! IF YOU KNOW ABOUT MY SPIDER SIGNAL, YOU MUST KNOW ABOUT MY SPIDER-POWERS...
SPIDER-AGILITY--

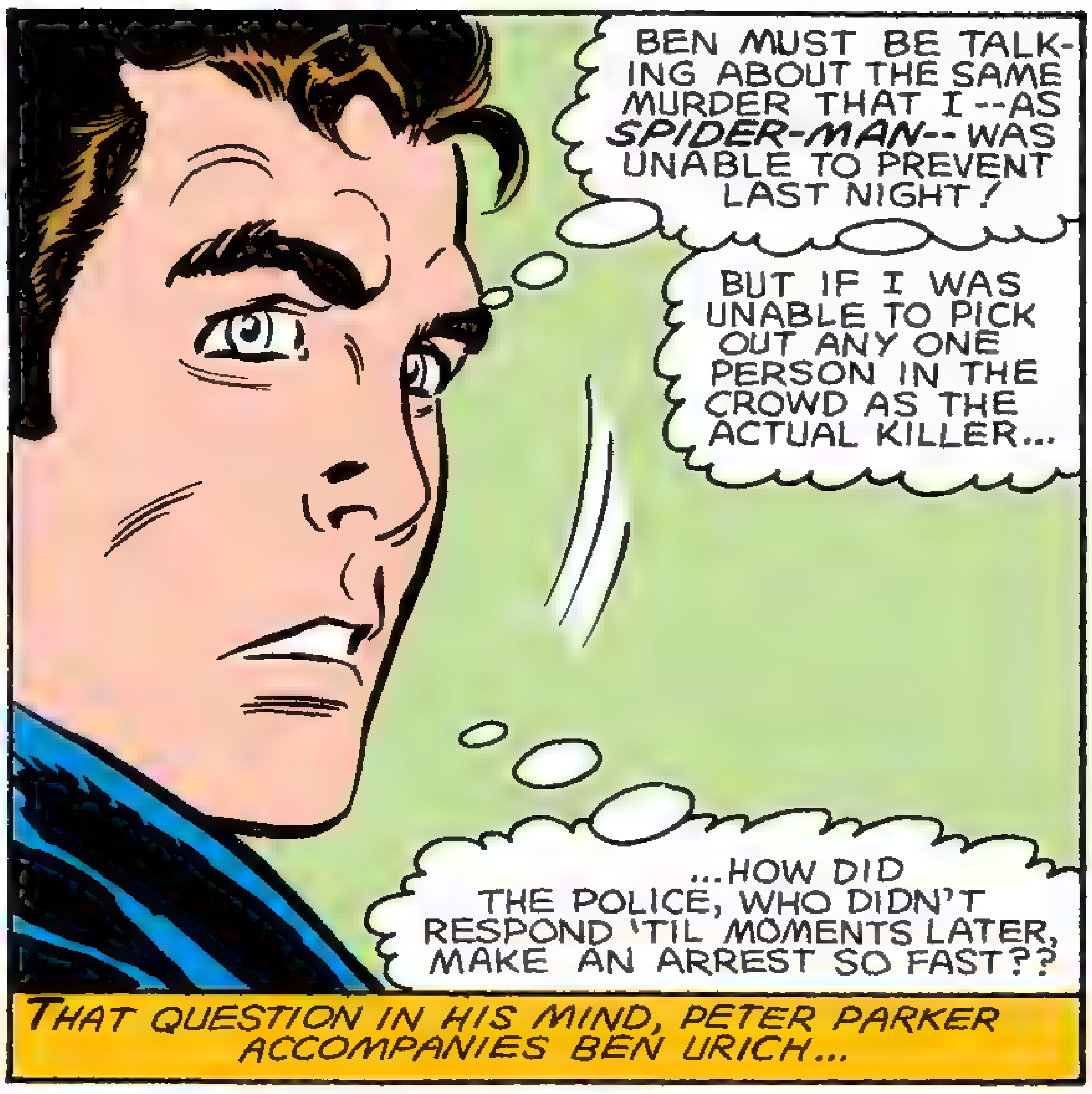

--SPIDER-STRENGTH!
LOOK FELLAS--
WHOK!
WHAM!
--WHY NOT JUST GIVE THE POOR GUY BACK HIS PROPERTY--
--AND I'LL FORGET THAT I CAUGHT YOU TRYING TO REDEEM IT WITHOUT A TICKET?
WHAT DO YOU SAY? DEAL?
MOST PARTICIPANTS IN THE LOOTING, UNWILLING TO TANGLE WITH THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN, ARE ABOUT TO ASSENT...
...WHEN, SUDDENLY--
MADRE DE DIOS, THE PAWN-BROKER--
"--HE'S GOT A GUN!"
ANIMALS! YOU'RE DESTROYING EVERYTHING I EVER WORKED FOR! EVERYTHING!
HEY, NOW WAIT A MINUTE! THAT'S NOT NECESSARY! PUT THAT THING DOWN!
I'M HERE TO MAKE 'EM GIVE BACK YOUR STUFF...!

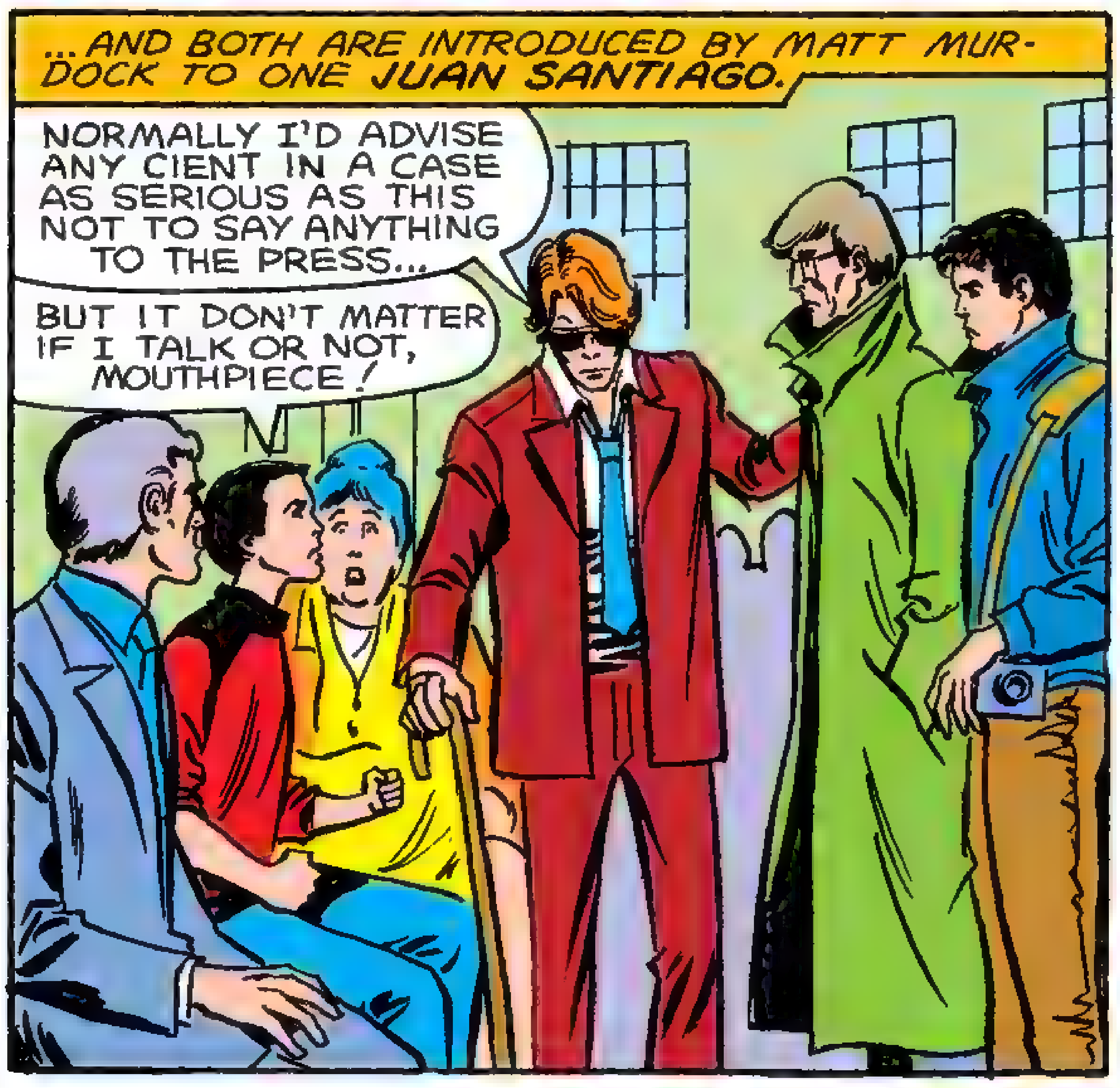

AND WHEN YOU LEAVE, HERO--THEN WHAT? THESE ANIMALS HAVE GOT TO LEARN--
--THAT A MAN'S WILLING TO PROTECT WHAT'S HIS!
AS HAS BEEN SAID BEFORE, VIOLENCE BREEDS VIOLENCE...
...AND NO ONE HAS A MONOPOLY ON GUNS.
THE MAN WANTS MURDER--
--MURDER HE'LL GET--
TIME SEEMS FROZEN...
...REALITY SLOWED.
BUT DEATH, AH, DEATH...
...STRIKES WITH THE SWIFTNESS OF LIGHTNING.
NO!
YES.

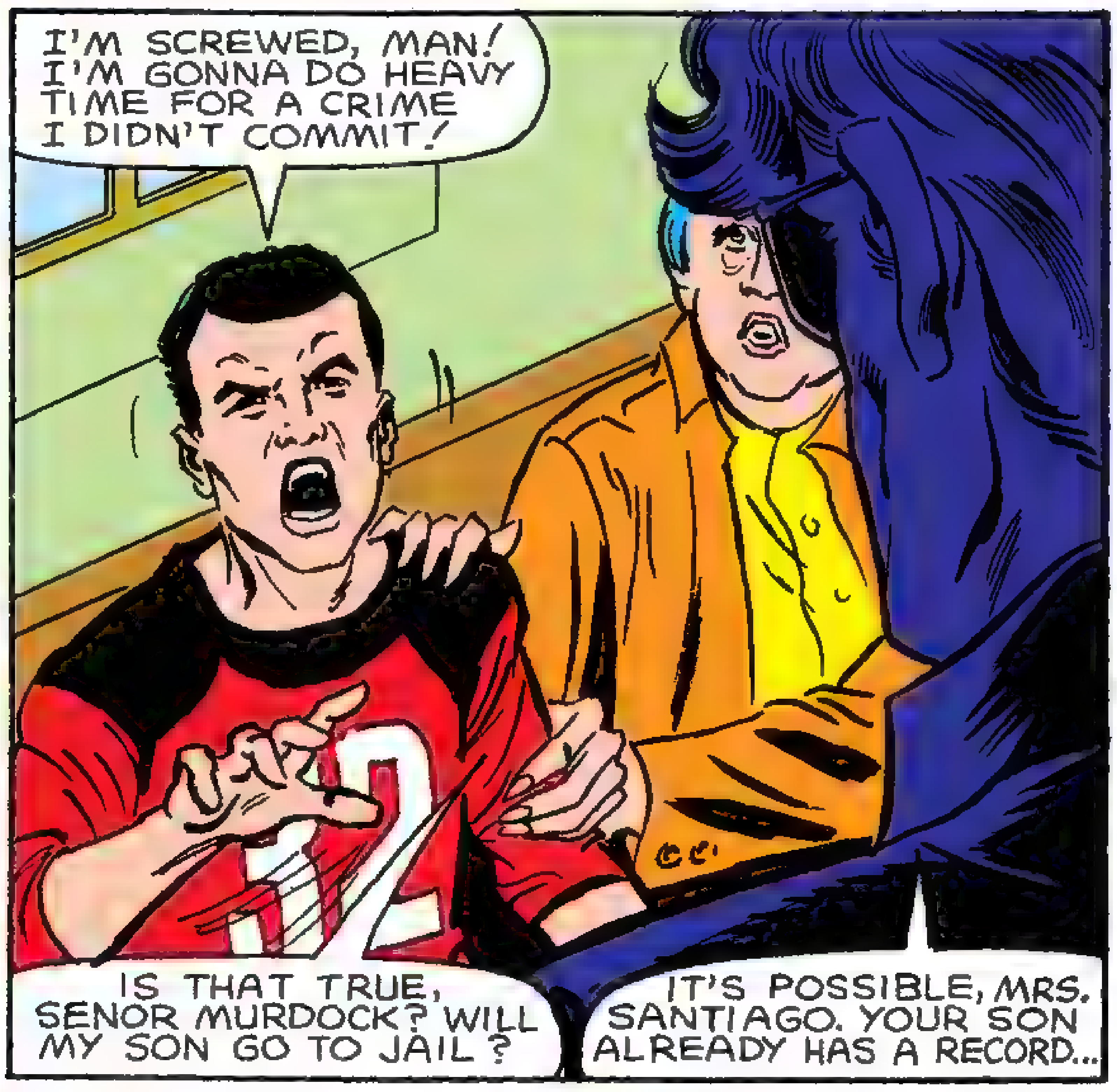

EMERGENCY CREWS LABORED THROUGH THE LONG NIGHT TO RESTORE NEW YORK CITY'S POWER. THEY SUCCEEDED...
DAYLIGHT DISPELS THE DARKNESS.
...BUT NOT BEFORE THE BLACKOUT HAD MANAGED TO DISRUPT THE PLANS OF THE BEAUTIFUL NATASHA ROMANOVA--
--THE BLACK WIDOW!
TODAY WAS GOING TO BE A NICE DAY.
I WAS TO MEET A FRIEND AT HIS OFFICE, GO OUT FOR AN EXQUISITE LUNCH...
...BUT THEN THE BLACKOUT LED TO A WAVE OF LOOTING--
--ARRESTS SKYROCKETED, AND THE COURTS, TO DEAL WITH THE SUDDEN INFLUX OF DEFENDANTS, WENT INTO EMERGENCY SESSION.
THERE WERE NOT ENOUGH LEGAL AID OR 18-B * LAWYERS TO HANDLE THE INCREASED CASELOAD.
SO MY LUNCH DATE WAS BROKEN AS MY DEDICATED ATTORNEY FRIEND--MATT MURDOCK--LEAPT INTO THE BREACH!
* PUBLIC DEFENDERS; PRIVATE ATTORNEYS APPOINTED BY THE COURT--DANNY.
"BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I CAN'T VISIT HIM AND LEND SOME MORAL SUPPORT!
MANHATTAN CRIMINAL COURT
"AH, THERE'S MY DESTINATION NOW!"

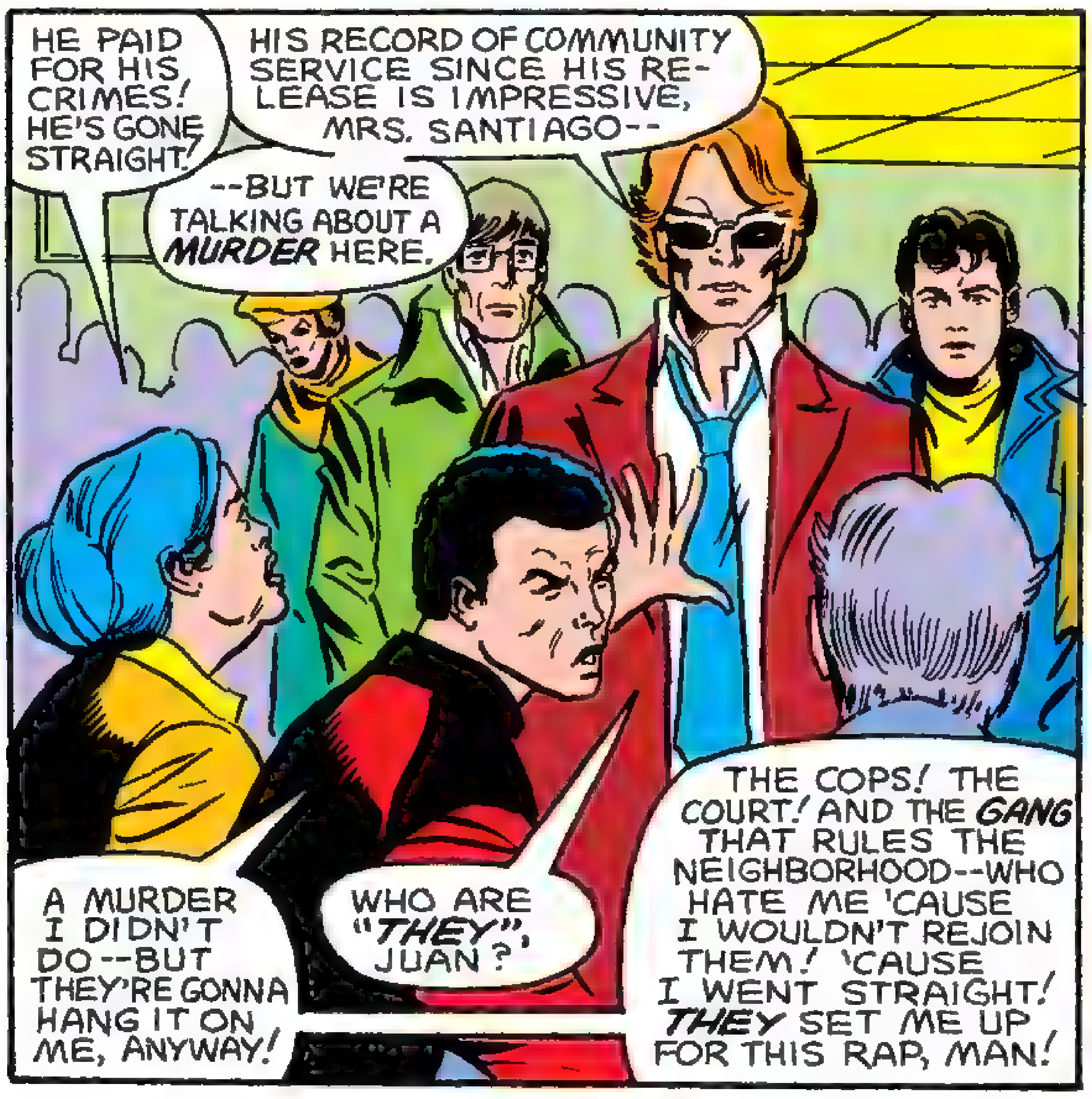

IN THE ARRAIGNMENTS PART, THOSE ARRESTED DURING THE WAVE OF RIOTING THE EVENING BEFORE SEEM TO OCCUPY EVERY SQUARE INCH OF FLOOR-SPACE.
THE CRUSH IS INCREDIBLE, THE DIN DEAFENING. SLEEPLESS DEFENDANTS ARE PARADED BEFORE EXHAUSTED JUDGES.
THIS IS INSTANT JUSTICE--THE LAW ON AN ASSEMBLY-LINE.
AND, FOR THE BLIND LAWYER WHOSE EVERY OTHER SENSE WAS HEIGHTENED BY THE ACCIDENT WHICH DEPRIVED HIM OF HIS SIGHT, IT IS ALL EXTREMELY TRAGIC.
HELLO, MATT.
TASHA? BUT--
I KNOW...
...YOU CAN'T EVEN GET FIVE MINUTES FOR LUNCH.
LOOK! THE BLACK WIDOW!
WHAT'S A GLAMOR GIRL LIKE HER DOING HERE?
WELL, I'LL WAIT A WHILE. MAYBE THEY'LL PASS A MANDATORY LUNCH LAW.
THANKS FOR COMING, TASHA. IT'S NICE TO HAVE A FRIEND AROUND.
BUT I'VE GOT TO GET BACK TO WORK.
YOU'RE ALWAYS PURSUING JUSTICE, AREN'T YOU, MATT...
...WHETHER IN A COURT OF LAW...OR AS DAREDEVIL.
I GUESS THAT'S WHAT MADE ME FALL FOR YOU WHEN WE WERE... MORE THAN FRIENDS.
ACROSS THE CROWDED COURTROOM, DAILY BUGLE REPORTER BEN URICH CONFERS WITH BUGLE FREE-LANCE PHOTOGRAPHER PETER PARKER...
WHAT ANGLE ARE YOU GOING TO COVER THE AFTERMATH OF THE BLACKOUT FROM, BEN?
I FIGURE ≷KOFF≶ PETE, WE CAN FOCUS ON ONE SPECIFIC, SENSELESS ≷KOFF≶ TRAGEDY THAT MIGHT PLACE THE WHOLE MESS INTO A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE FOR ≷KOFF≶ OUR READERS.
SOUNDS GOOD. GOT ANY LEADS?
YEAH ≷KOFF≶ A TIP FROM A LAWYER FRIEND OF MINE.
IN FACT, THERE'S ≷KOFF≶ MATT MURDOCK NOW--

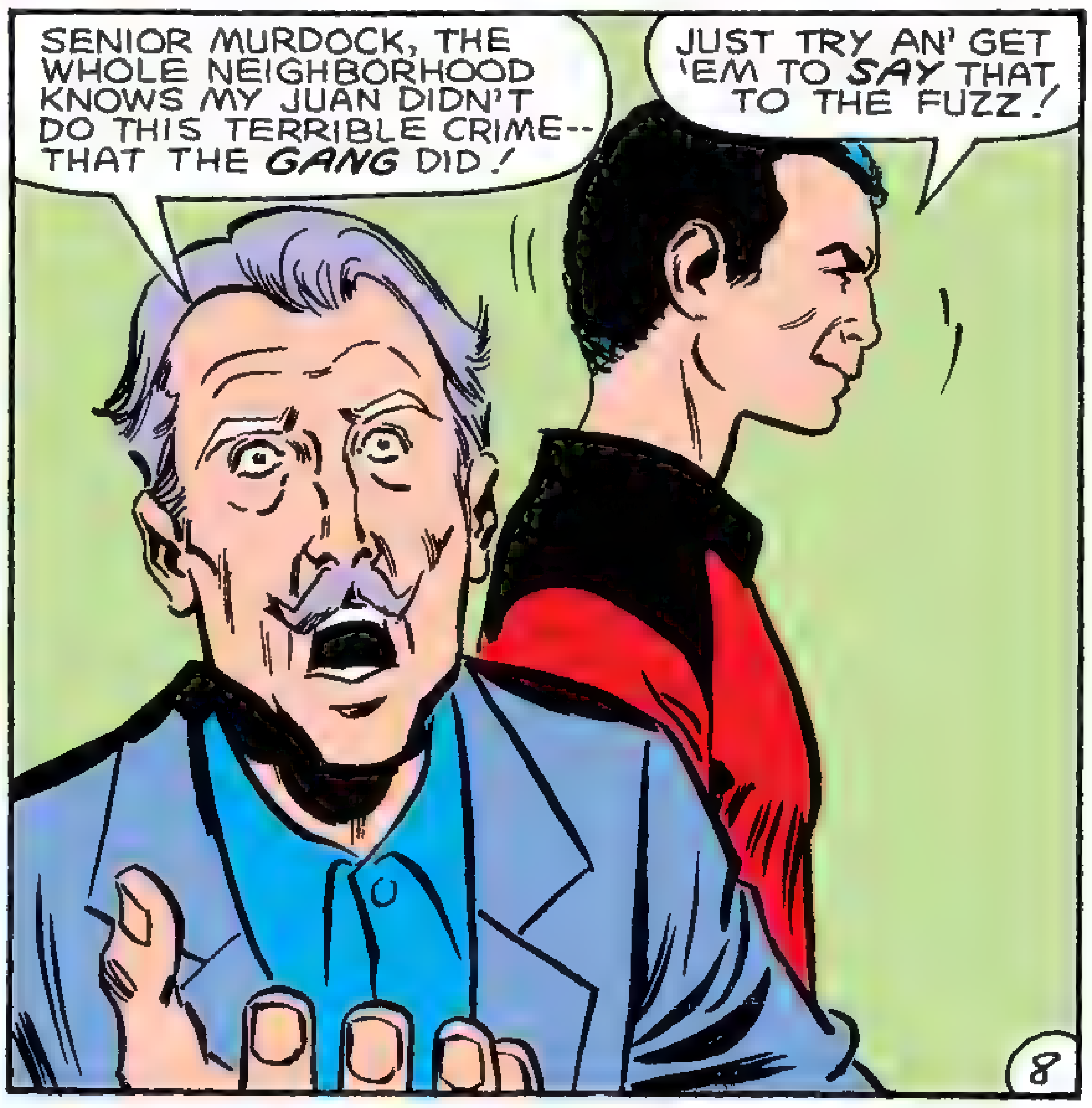

INTERVIEWING HIS *CLIENT* ABOUT LAST NIGHT'S *MURDER* OF A ≷KOFF≷ *PAWNBROKER!*
WHAT?!!

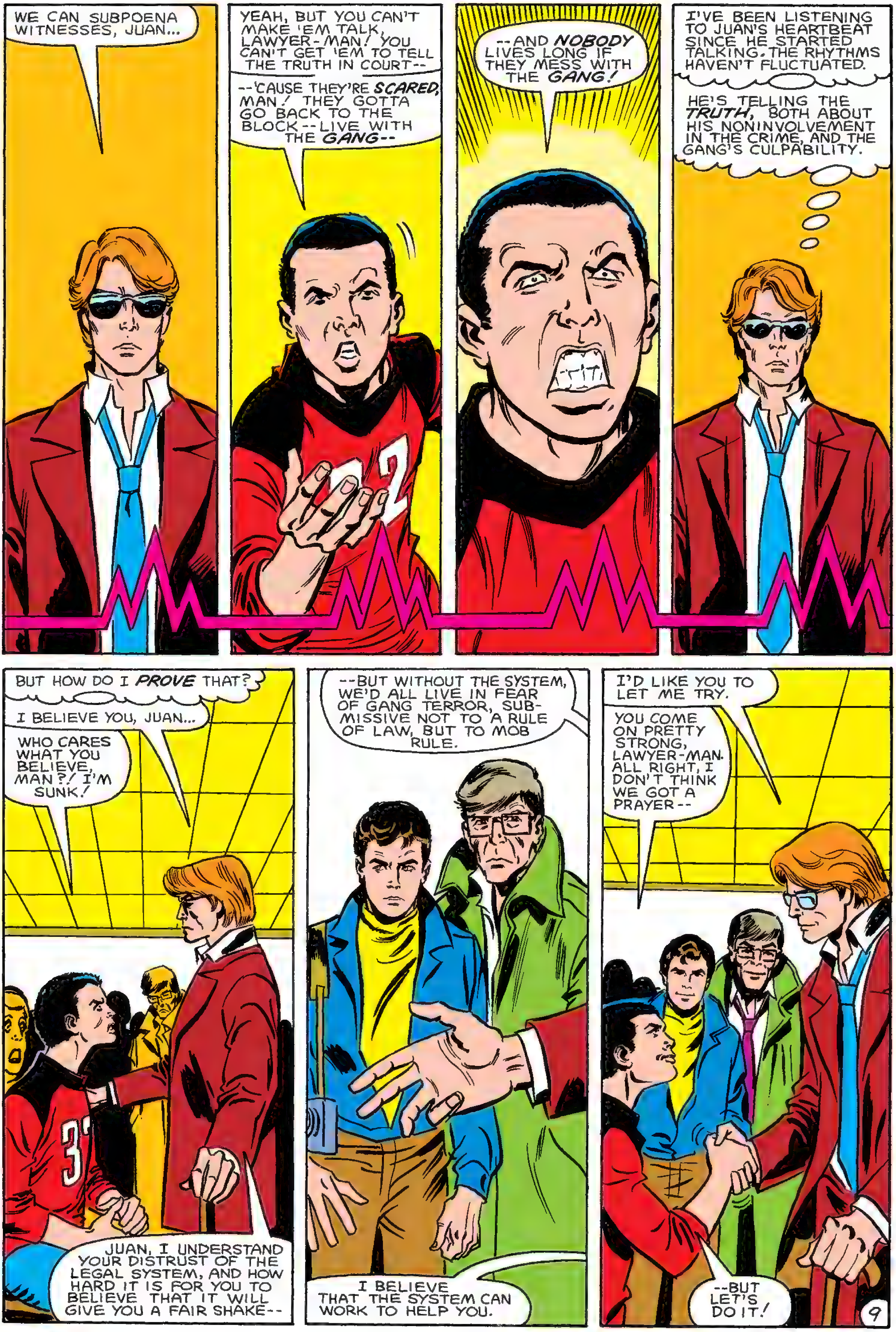

BEN MUST BE TALKING ABOUT THE SAME MURDER THAT I--AS *SPIDER-MAN*--WAS UNABLE TO PREVENT LAST NIGHT!
BUT IF I WAS UNABLE TO PICK OUT ANY ONE PERSON IN THE CROWD AS THE ACTUAL KILLER...
...HOW DID THE POLICE, WHO DIDN'T RESPOND 'TIL MOMENTS LATER, MAKE AN ARREST SO FAST??
THAT QUESTION IN HIS MIND, PETER PARKER ACCOMPANIES BEN URICH...

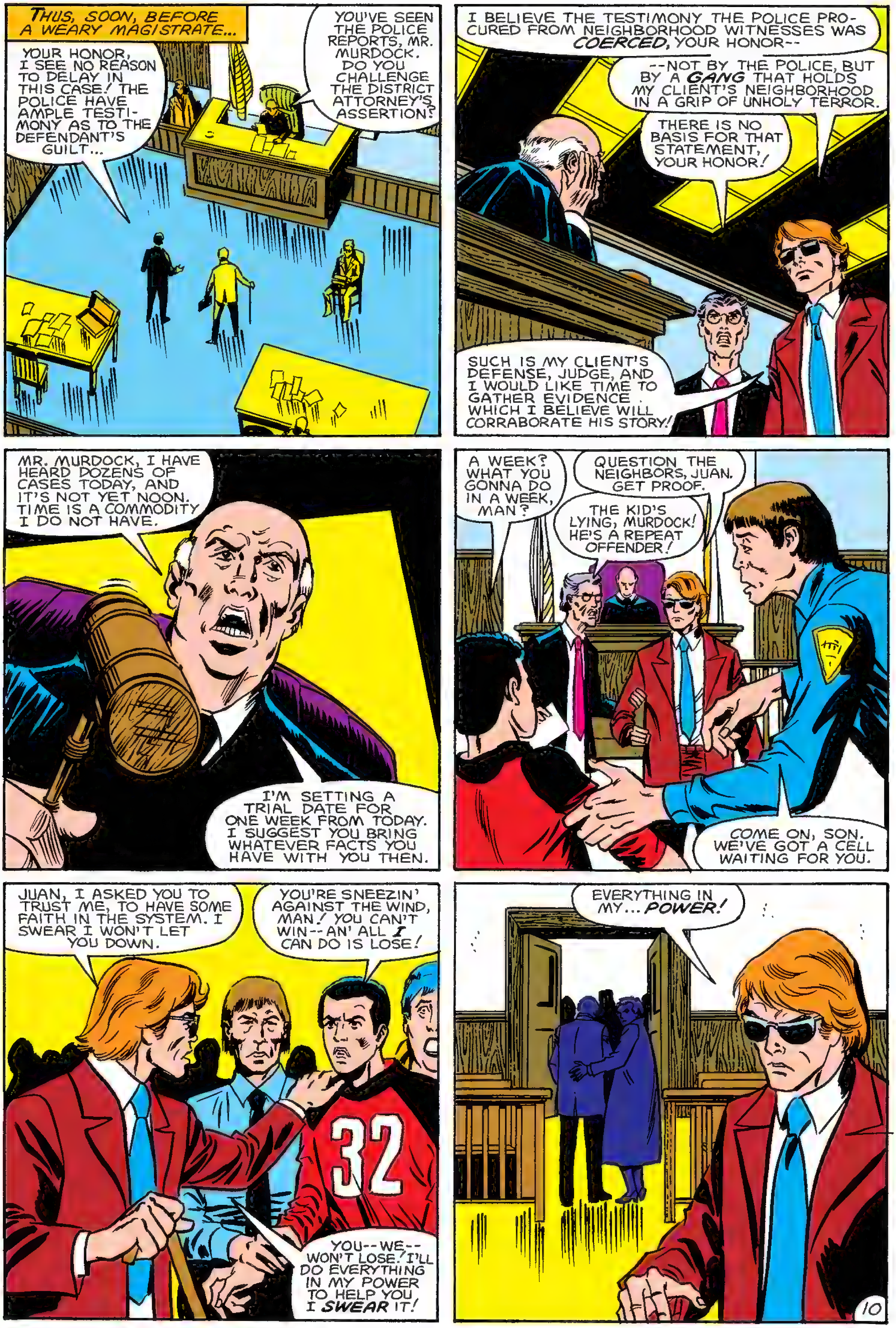

...AND BOTH ARE INTRODUCED BY MATT MURDOCK TO ONE ***JUAN SANTIAGO.***
NORMALLY I'D ADVISE ANY CIENT IN A CASE AS SERIOUS AS THIS NOT TO SAY ANYTHING TO THE PRESS...
BUT IT DON'T MATTER IF I TALK OR NOT, MOUTHPIECE!

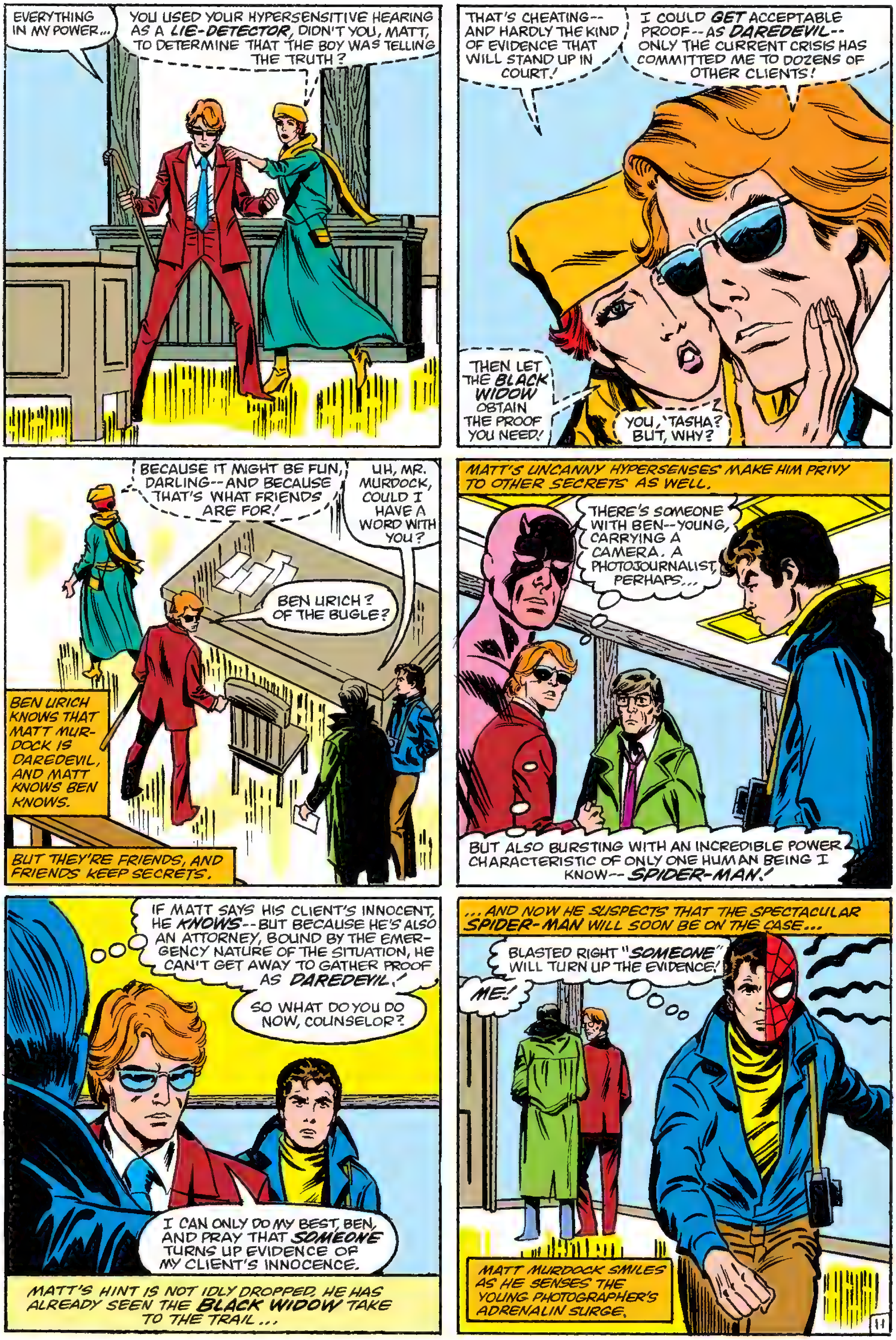

I'M SCREWED, MAN! I'M GONNA DO HEAVY TIME FOR A CRIME I DIDN'T COMMIT!
IS THAT TRUE, SENOR MURDOCK? WILL MY SON GO TO JAIL?
IT'S POSSIBLE, MRS. SANTIAGO. YOUR SON ALREADY HAS A RECORD...

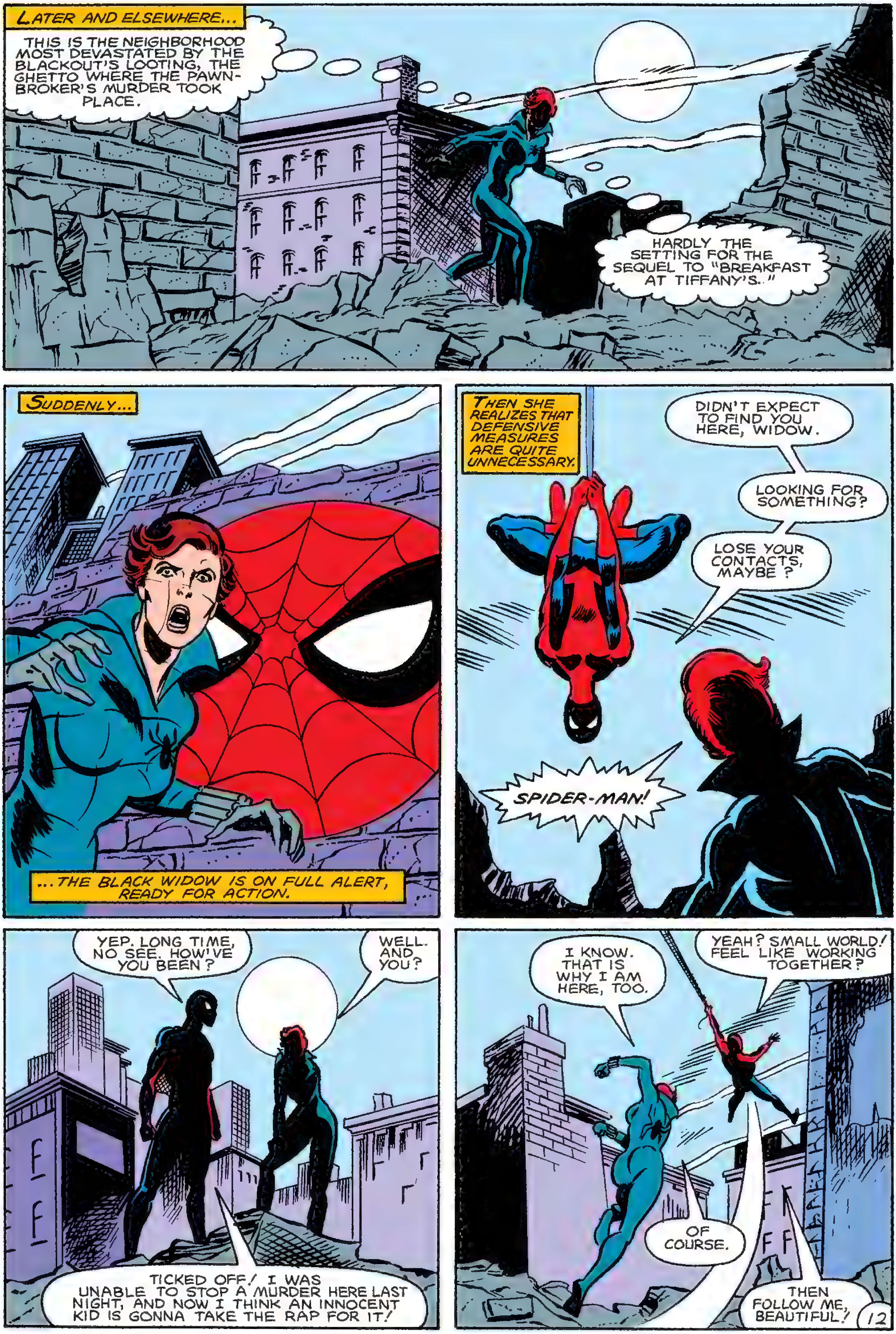

HE PAID FOR HIS CRIMES! HE'S GONE STRAIGHT!
HIS RECORD OF COMMUNITY SERVICE SINCE HIS RELEASE IS IMPRESSIVE, MRS. SANTIAGO--
--BUT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT A ***MURDER*** HERE.
A MURDER I DIDN'T DO--BUT THEY'RE GONNA HANG IT ON ME, ANYWAY!
WHO ARE "*THEY*", JUAN?
THE COPS! THE COURT! AND THE ***GANG*** THAT RULES THE NEIGHBORHOOD--WHO HATE ME 'CAUSE I WOULDN'T REJOIN THEM! 'CAUSE I WENT STRAIGHT! ***THEY*** SET ME UP FOR THIS RAP, MAN!

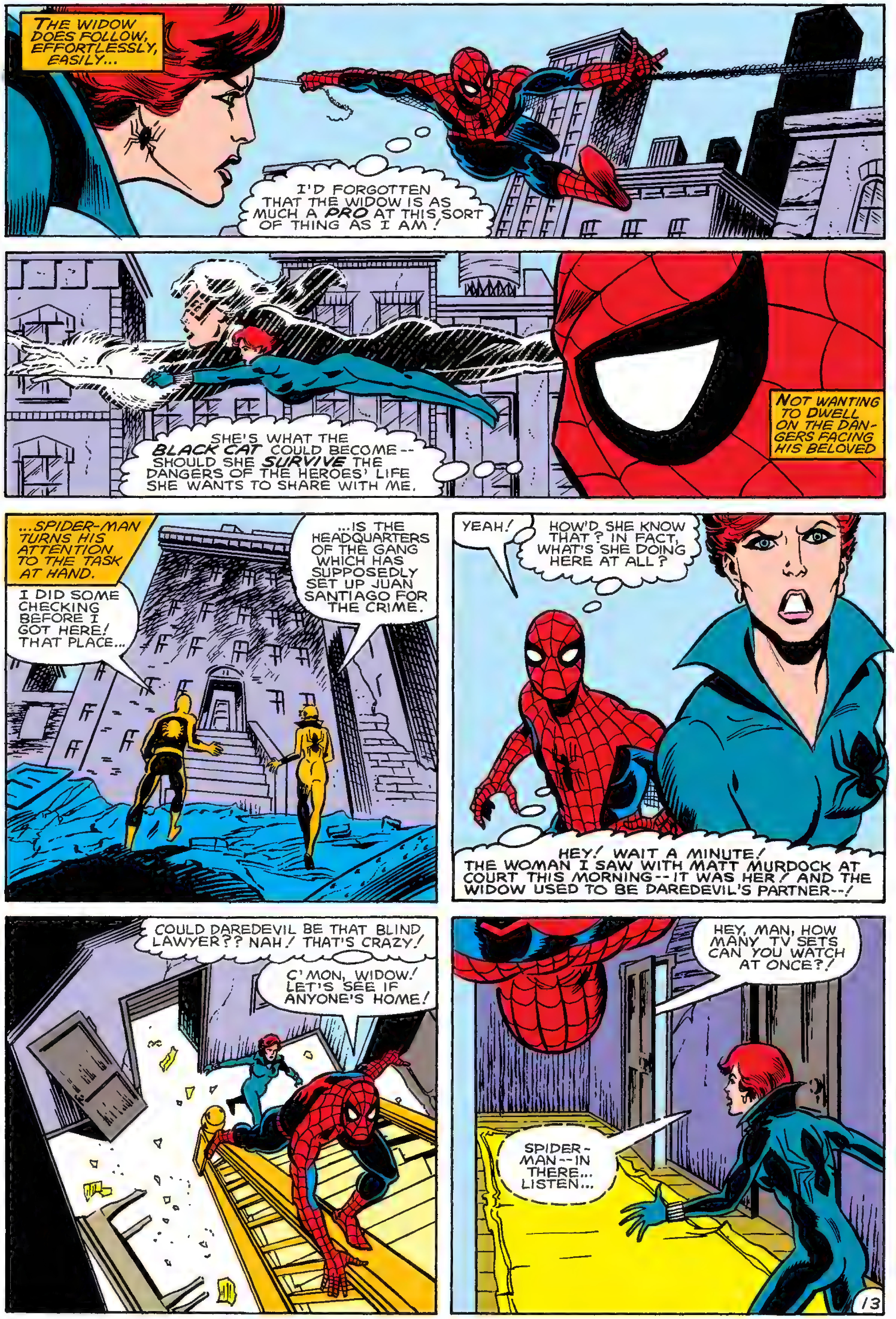

SENIOR MURDOCK, THE WHOLE NEIGHBORHOOD KNOWS MY JUAN DIDN'T DO THIS TERRIBLE CRIME--THAT THE ***GANG*** DID!
JUST TRY AN' GET 'EM TO *SAY* THAT TO THE FUZZ!

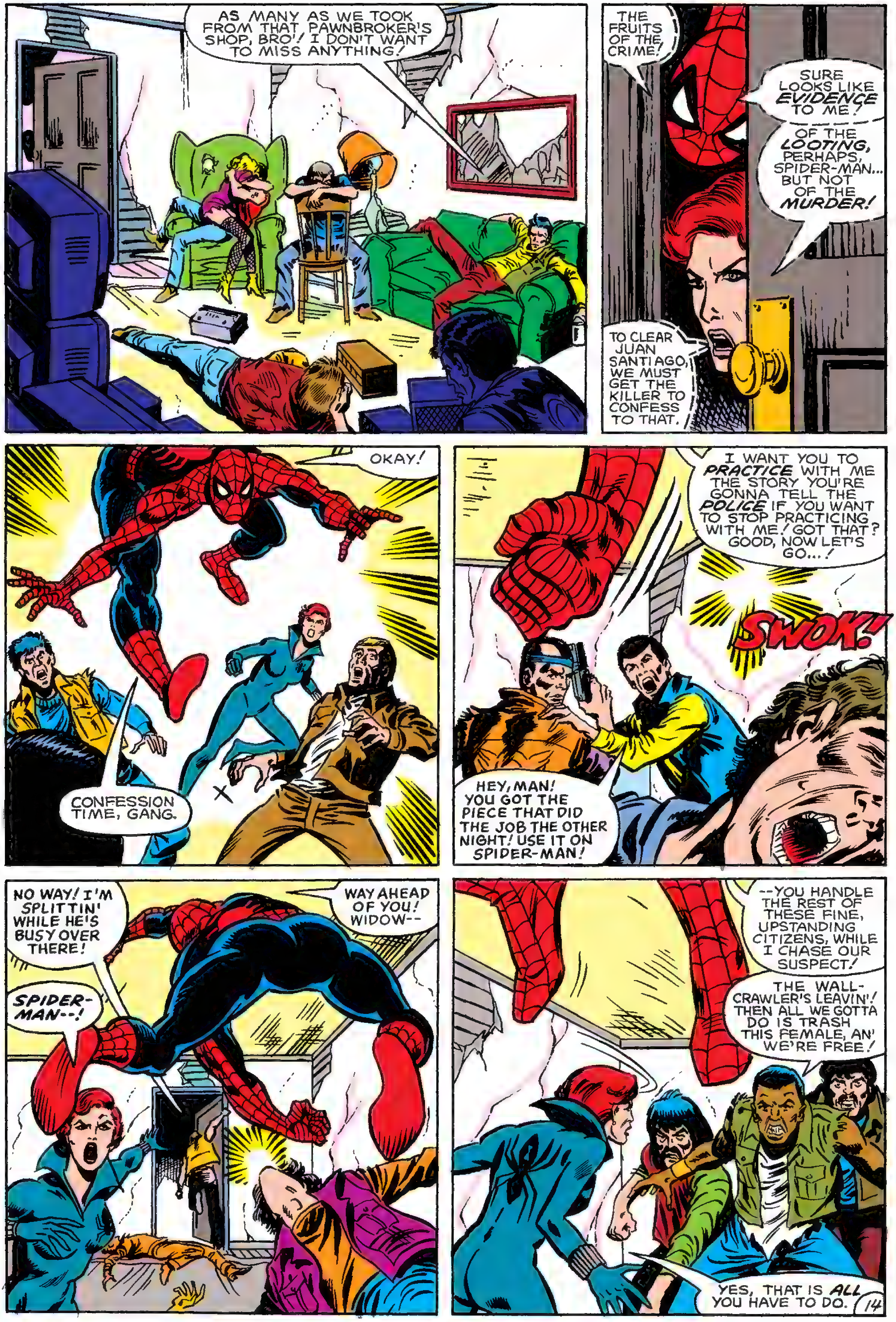

WE CAN SUBPOENA WITNESSES, JUAN...
YEAH, BUT YOU CAN'T MAKE 'EM TALK, LAWYER-MAN! YOU CAN'T GET 'EM TO TELL THE TRUTH IN COURT--
--'CAUSE THEY'RE SCARED, MAN! THEY GOTTA GO BACK TO THE BLOCK--LIVE WITH THE GANG--
--AND NOBODY LIVES LONG IF THEY MESS WITH THE GANG!
I'VE BEEN LISTENING TO JUAN'S HEARTBEAT SINCE HE STARTED TALKING. THE RHYTHMS HAVEN'T FLUCTUATED.
HE'S TELLING THE TRUTH, BOTH ABOUT HIS NONINVOLVEMENT IN THE CRIME, AND THE GANG'S CULPABILITY.
BUT HOW DO I PROVE THAT?
I BELIEVE YOU, JUAN...
WHO CARES WHAT YOU BELIEVE, MAN?! I'M SUNK!
JUAN, I UNDERSTAND YOUR DISTRUST OF THE LEGAL SYSTEM, AND HOW HARD IT IS FOR YOU TO BELIEVE THAT IT WILL GIVE YOU A FAIR SHAKE--
--BUT WITHOUT THE SYSTEM, WE'D ALL LIVE IN FEAR OF GANG TERROR, SUBMISSIVE NOT TO A RULE OF LAW, BUT TO MOB RULE.
I BELIEVE THAT THE SYSTEM CAN WORK TO HELP YOU.
I'D LIKE YOU TO LET ME TRY.
YOU COME ON PRETTY STRONG, LAWYER-MAN. ALL RIGHT, I DON'T THINK WE GOT A PRAYER--
--BUT LET'S DO IT!

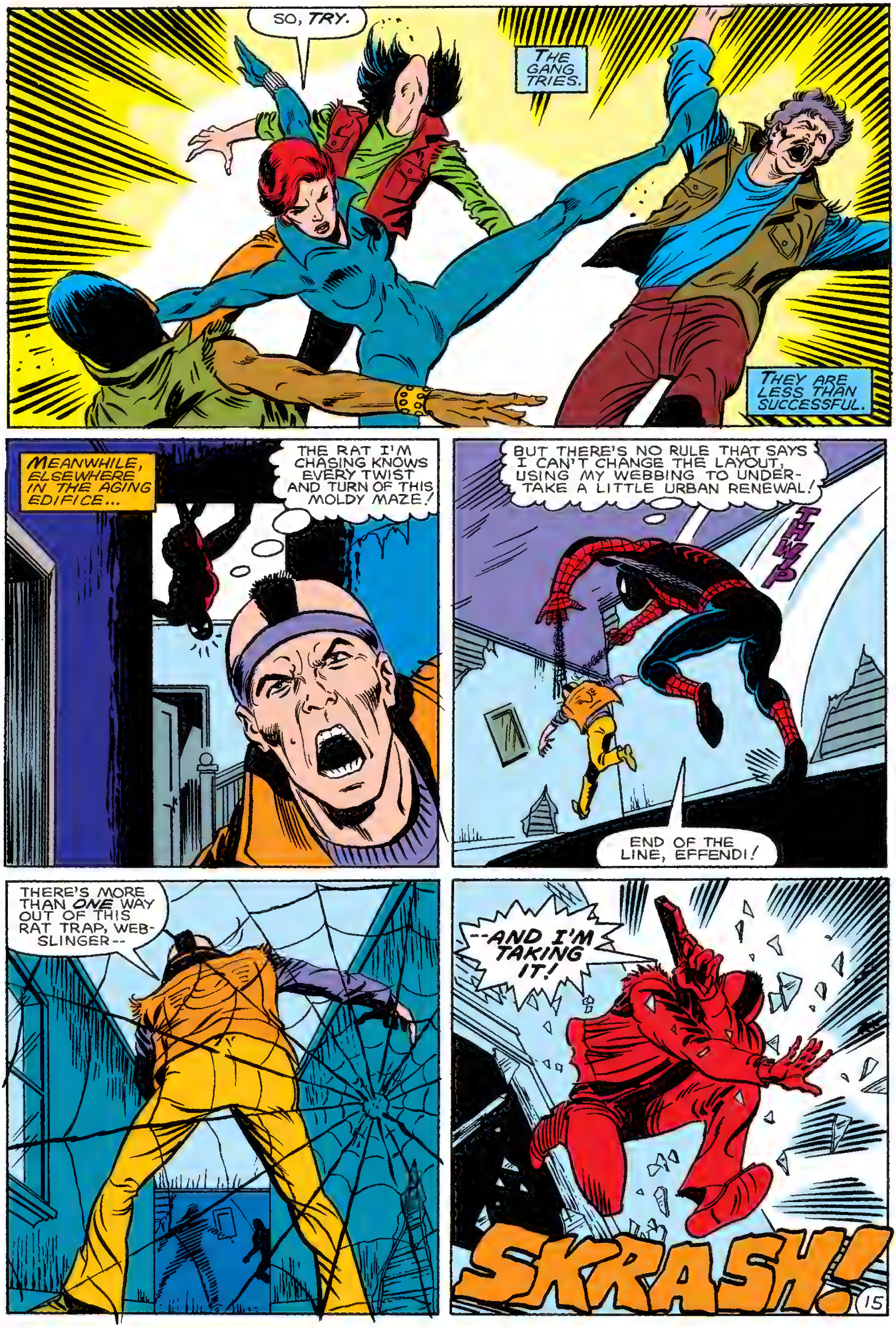

THUS, SOON, BEFORE A WEARY MAGISTRATE...
YOUR HONOR, I SEE NO REASON TO DELAY IN THIS CASE! THE POLICE HAVE AMPLE TESTIMONY AS TO THE DEFENDANT'S GUILT...
YOU'VE SEEN THE POLICE REPORTS, MR. MURDOCK. DO YOU CHALLENGE THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S ASSERTION?
I BELIEVE THE TESTIMONY THE POLICE PROCURED FROM NEIGHBORHOOD WITNESSES WAS *COERCED*, YOUR HONOR--
--NOT BY THE POLICE, BUT BY A *GANG* THAT HOLDS MY CLIENT'S NEIGHBORHOOD IN A GRIP OF UNHOLY TERROR.
THERE IS NO BASIS FOR THAT STATEMENT, YOUR HONOR!
SUCH IS MY CLIENT'S DEFENSE, JUDGE, AND I WOULD LIKE TIME TO GATHER EVIDENCE WHICH I BELIEVE WILL CORRABORATE HIS STORY!
MR. MURDOCK, I HAVE HEARD DOZENS OF CASES TODAY, AND IT'S NOT YET NOON. TIME IS A COMMODITY I DO NOT HAVE.
I'M SETTING A TRIAL DATE FOR ONE WEEK FROM TODAY. I SUGGEST YOU BRING WHATEVER FACTS YOU HAVE WITH YOU THEN.
A WEEK? WHAT YOU GONNA DO IN A WEEK, MAN?
QUESTION THE NEIGHBORS, JUAN. GET PROOF.
THE KID'S LYING, MURDOCK! HE'S A REPEAT OFFENDER!
COME ON, SON. WE'VE GOT A CELL WAITING FOR YOU.
JUAN, I ASKED YOU TO TRUST ME, TO HAVE SOME FAITH IN THE SYSTEM. I SWEAR I WON'T LET YOU DOWN.
YOU'RE SNEEZIN' AGAINST THE WIND, MAN! YOU CAN'T WIN--AN' ALL *I* CAN DO IS LOSE!
32
YOU--WE--WON'T LOSE! I'LL DO EVERYTHING IN MY POWER TO HELP YOU I *SWEAR* IT!
EVERYTHING IN MY... *POWER!*

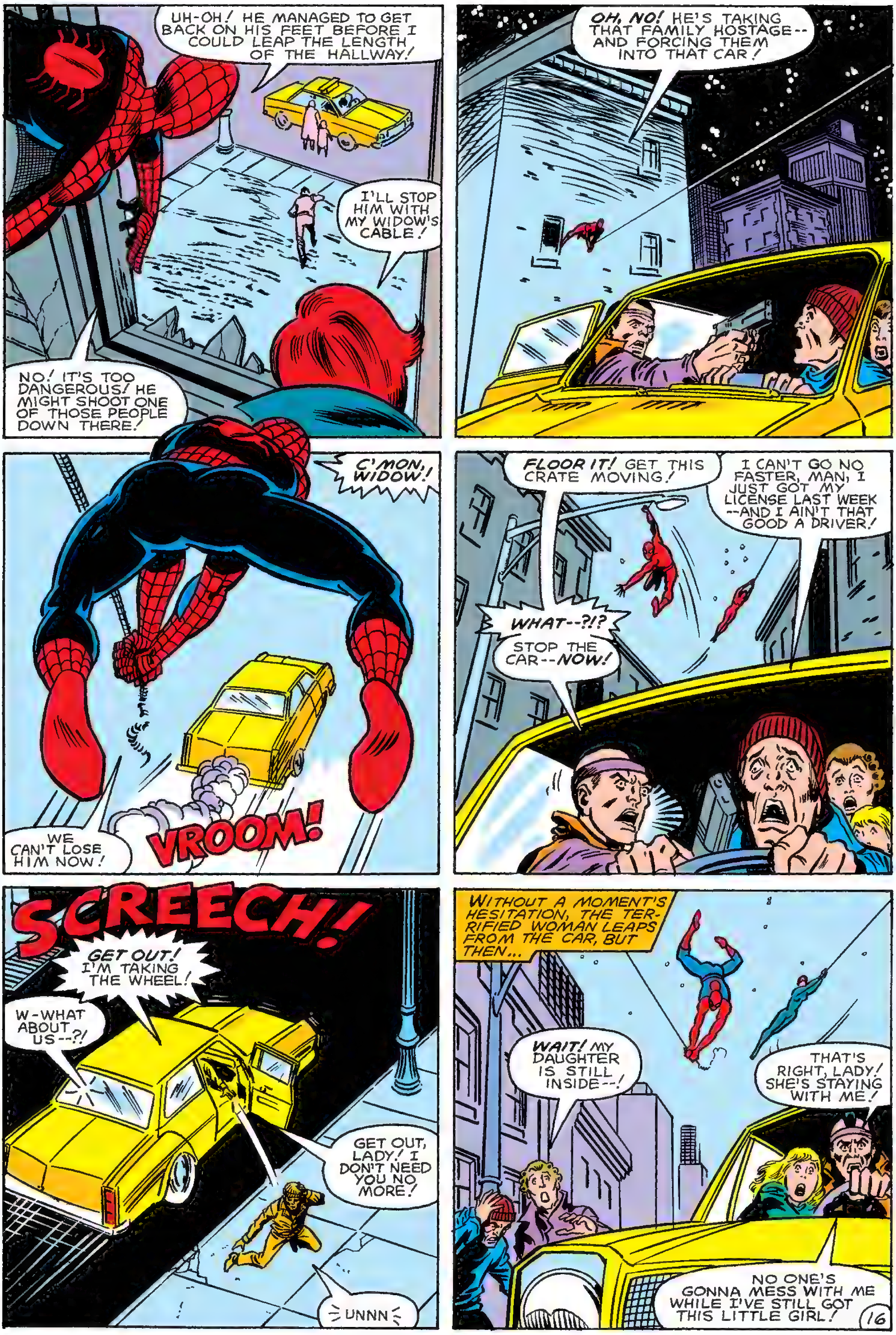

EVERYTHING IN MY POWER...
YOU USED YOUR HYPERSENSITIVE HEARING AS A *LIE-DETECTOR*, DIDN'T YOU, MATT, TO DETERMINE THAT THE BOY WAS TELLING THE TRUTH?
THAT'S CHEATING-- AND HARDLY THE KIND OF EVIDENCE THAT WILL STAND UP IN COURT!
I COULD *GET* ACCEPTABLE PROOF--AS *DAREDEVIL*-- ONLY THE CURRENT CRISIS HAS COMMITTED ME TO DOZENS OF OTHER CLIENTS!
THEN LET THE *BLACK WIDOW* OBTAIN THE PROOF YOU NEED!
YOU, 'TASHA? BUT, WHY?
BECAUSE IT MIGHT BE FUN, DARLING--AND BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE FOR!
UH, MR. MURDOCK, COULD I HAVE A WORD WITH YOU?
BEN URICH? OF THE BUGLE?
BEN URICH KNOWS THAT MATT MURDOCK IS DAREDEVIL, AND MATT KNOWS BEN KNOWS.
BUT THEY'RE FRIENDS, AND FRIENDS KEEP SECRETS.
MATT'S UNCANNY HYPERSENSES MAKE HIM PRIVY TO OTHER SECRETS AS WELL.
THERE'S SOMEONE WITH BEN--YOUNG, CARRYING A CAMERA. A PHOTOJOURNALIST, PERHAPS...
BUT ALSO BURSTING WITH AN INCREDIBLE POWER CHARACTERISTIC OF ONLY ONE HUMAN BEING I KNOW-- *SPIDER-MAN!*
IF MATT SAYS HIS CLIENT'S INNOCENT, HE *KNOWS*--BUT BECAUSE HE'S ALSO AN ATTORNEY, BOUND BY THE EMERGENCY NATURE OF THE SITUATION, HE CAN'T GET AWAY TO GATHER PROOF AS *DAREDEVIL!*
SO WHAT DO YOU DO NOW, COUNSELOR?
I CAN ONLY DO MY BEST, BEN, AND PRAY THAT *SOMEONE* TURNS UP EVIDENCE OF MY CLIENT'S INNOCENCE.
MATT'S HINT IS NOT IDLY DROPPED. HE HAS ALREADY SEEN THE *BLACK WIDOW* TAKE TO THE TRAIL...
...AND NOW HE SUSPECTS THAT THE SPECTACULAR *SPIDER-MAN* WILL SOON BE ON THE CASE...
BLASTED RIGHT "*SOMEONE*" WILL TURN UP THE EVIDENCE!
ME!
MATT MURDOCK SMILES AS HE SENSES THE YOUNG PHOTOGRAPHER'S ADRENALIN SURGE.

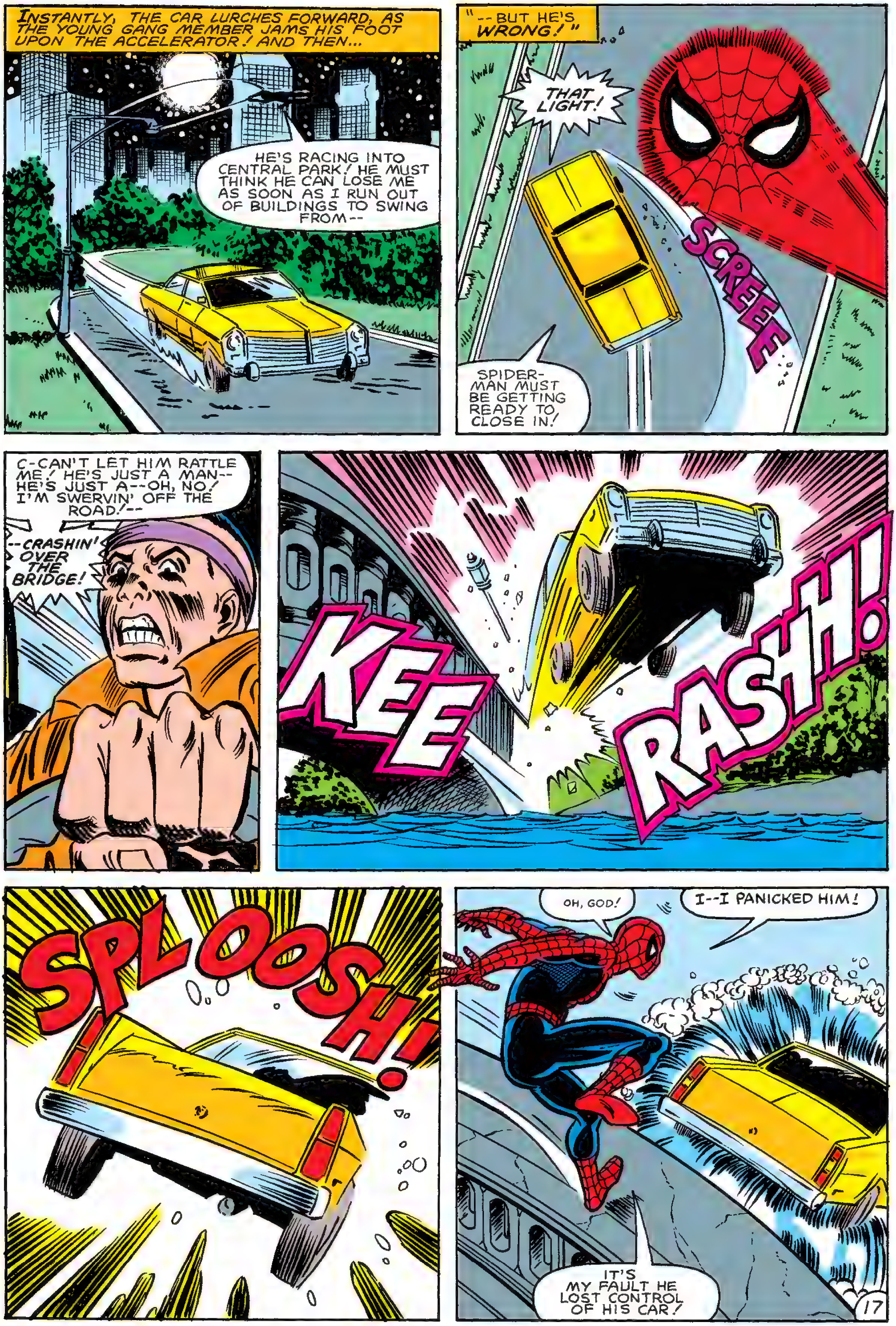

LATER AND ELSEWHERE...
THIS IS THE NEIGHBORHOOD MOST DEVASTATED BY THE BLACKOUT'S LOOTING, THE GHETTO WHERE THE PAWNBROKER'S MURDER TOOK PLACE.
HARDLY THE SETTING FOR THE SEQUEL TO "BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S."
SUDDENLY...
...THE BLACK WIDOW IS ON FULL ALERT, READY FOR ACTION.
THEN SHE REALIZES THAT DEFENSIVE MEASURES ARE QUITE UNNECESSARY.
DIDN'T EXPECT TO FIND YOU HERE, WIDOW.
LOOKING FOR SOMETHING?
LOSE YOUR CONTACTS, MAYBE?
SPIDER-MAN!
YEP. LONG TIME, NO SEE. HOW'VE YOU BEEN?
WELL. AND YOU?
TICKED OFF! I WAS UNABLE TO STOP A MURDER HERE LAST NIGHT, AND NOW I THINK AN INNOCENT KID IS GONNA TAKE THE RAP FOR IT!
I KNOW. THAT IS WHY I AM HERE, TOO.
YEAH? SMALL WORLD! FEEL LIKE WORKING TOGETHER?
OF COURSE.
THEN FOLLOW ME, BEAUTIFUL!

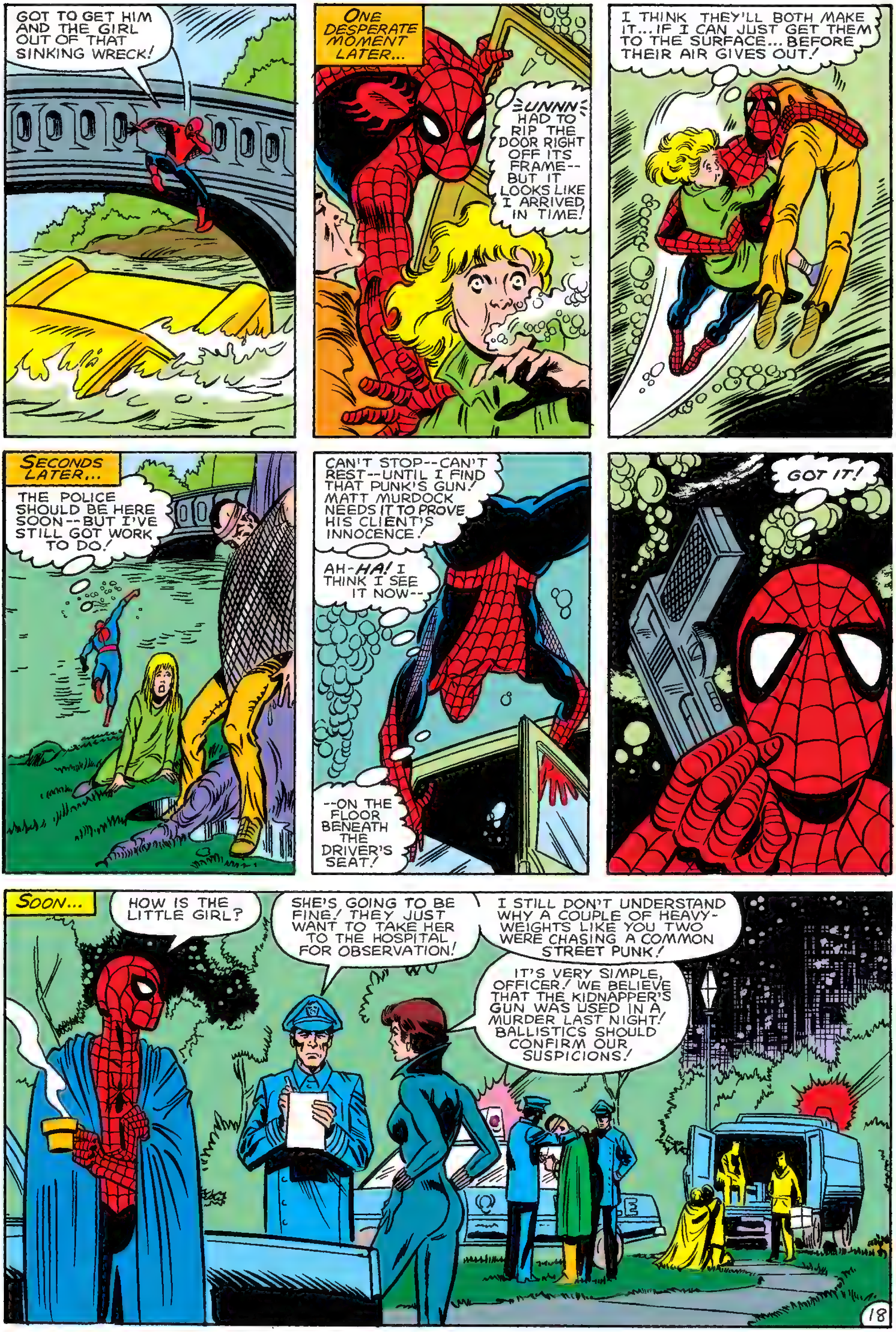

THE WIDOW DOES FOLLOW, EFFORTLESSLY, EASILY...
I'D FORGOTTEN THAT THE WIDOW IS AS MUCH A PRO AT THIS SORT OF THING AS I AM!
SHE'S WHAT THE BLACK CAT COULD BECOME -- SHOULD SHE SURVIVE THE DANGERS OF THE HEROES' LIFE SHE WANTS TO SHARE WITH ME.
NOT WANTING TO DWELL ON THE DANGERS FACING HIS BELOVED
...SPIDER-MAN TURNS HIS ATTENTION TO THE TASK AT HAND.
I DID SOME CHECKING BEFORE I GOT HERE! THAT PLACE...
...IS THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE GANG WHICH HAS SUPPOSEDLY SET UP JUAN SANTIAGO FOR THE CRIME.
YEAH!
HOW'D SHE KNOW THAT? IN FACT, WHAT'S SHE DOING HERE AT ALL?
HEY! WAIT A MINUTE! THE WOMAN I SAW WITH MATT MURDOCK AT COURT THIS MORNING -- IT WAS HER! AND THE WIDOW USED TO BE DAREDEVIL'S PARTNER--!
COULD DAREDEVIL BE THAT BLIND LAWYER?? NAH! THAT'S CRAZY!
C'MON, WIDOW! LET'S SEE IF ANYONE'S HOME!
HEY, MAN, HOW MANY TV SETS CAN YOU WATCH AT ONCE?!
SPIDER-MAN -- IN THERE... LISTEN...

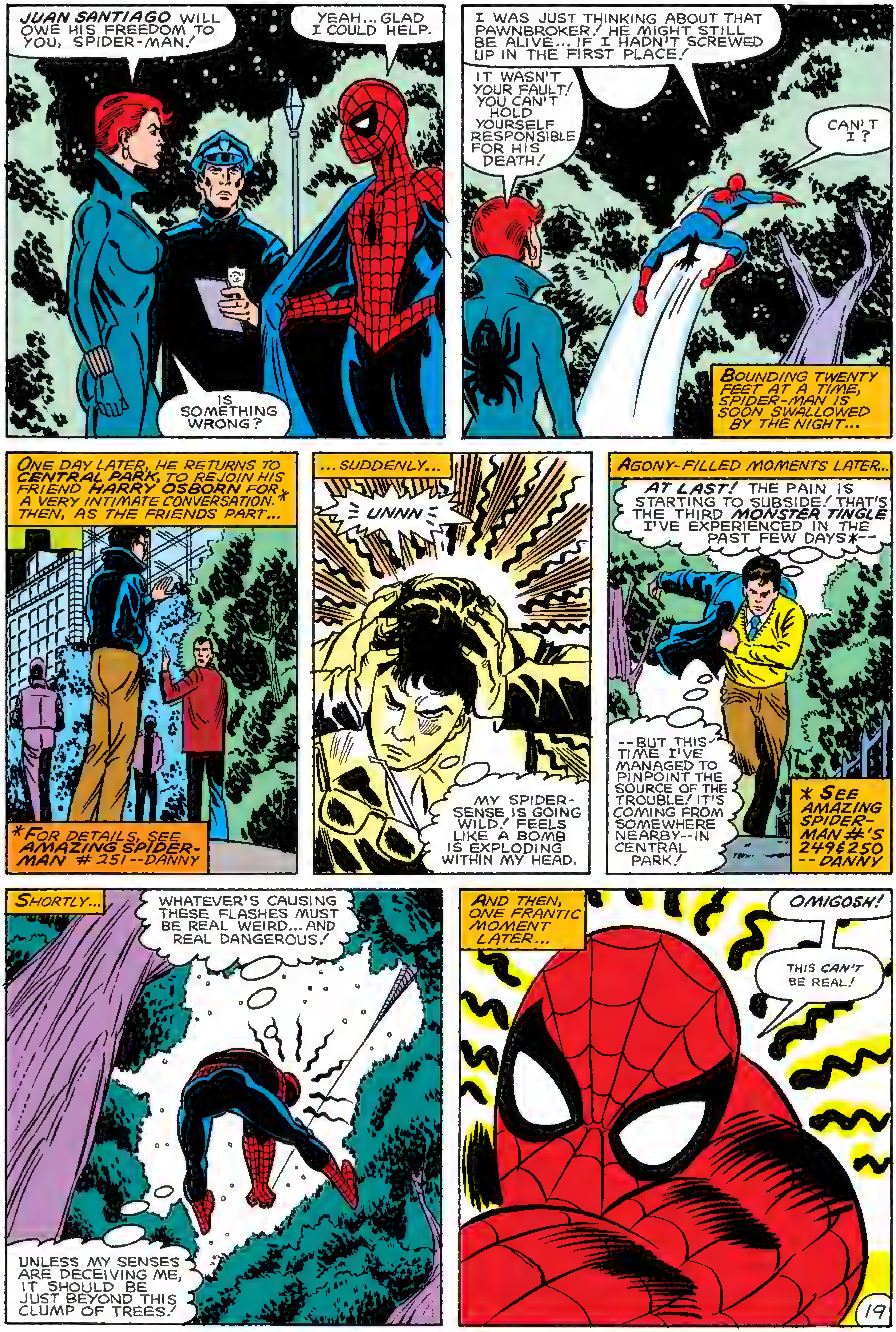

AS MANY AS WE TOOK FROM THAT PAWNBROKER'S SHOP, BRO! I DON'T WANT TO MISS ANYTHING!
THE FRUITS OF THE CRIME!
SURE LOOKS LIKE *EVIDENCE* TO ME!
OF THE *LOOTING,* PERHAPS, SPIDER-MAN... BUT NOT OF THE *MURDER!*
TO CLEAR JUAN SANTIAGO, WE MUST GET THE KILLER TO CONFESS TO THAT.
OKAY!
CONFESSION TIME, GANG.
I WANT YOU TO *PRACTICE* WITH ME THE STORY YOU'RE GONNA TELL THE *POLICE* IF YOU WANT TO STOP PRACTICING WITH ME! GOT THAT? GOOD, NOW LET'S GO...!
SWOK!
HEY, MAN! YOU GOT THE PIECE THAT DID THE JOB THE OTHER NIGHT! USE IT ON SPIDER-MAN!
NO WAY! I'M SPLITTIN' WHILE HE'S BUSY OVER THERE!
WAY AHEAD OF YOU! WIDOW--
SPIDER-MAN--!
--YOU HANDLE THE REST OF THESE FINE, UPSTANDING CITIZENS, WHILE I CHASE OUR SUSPECT!
THE WALL-CRAWLER'S LEAVIN'! THEN ALL WE GOTTA DO IS TRASH THIS FEMALE, AN' WE'RE FREE!
YES, THAT IS *ALL* YOU HAVE TO DO.

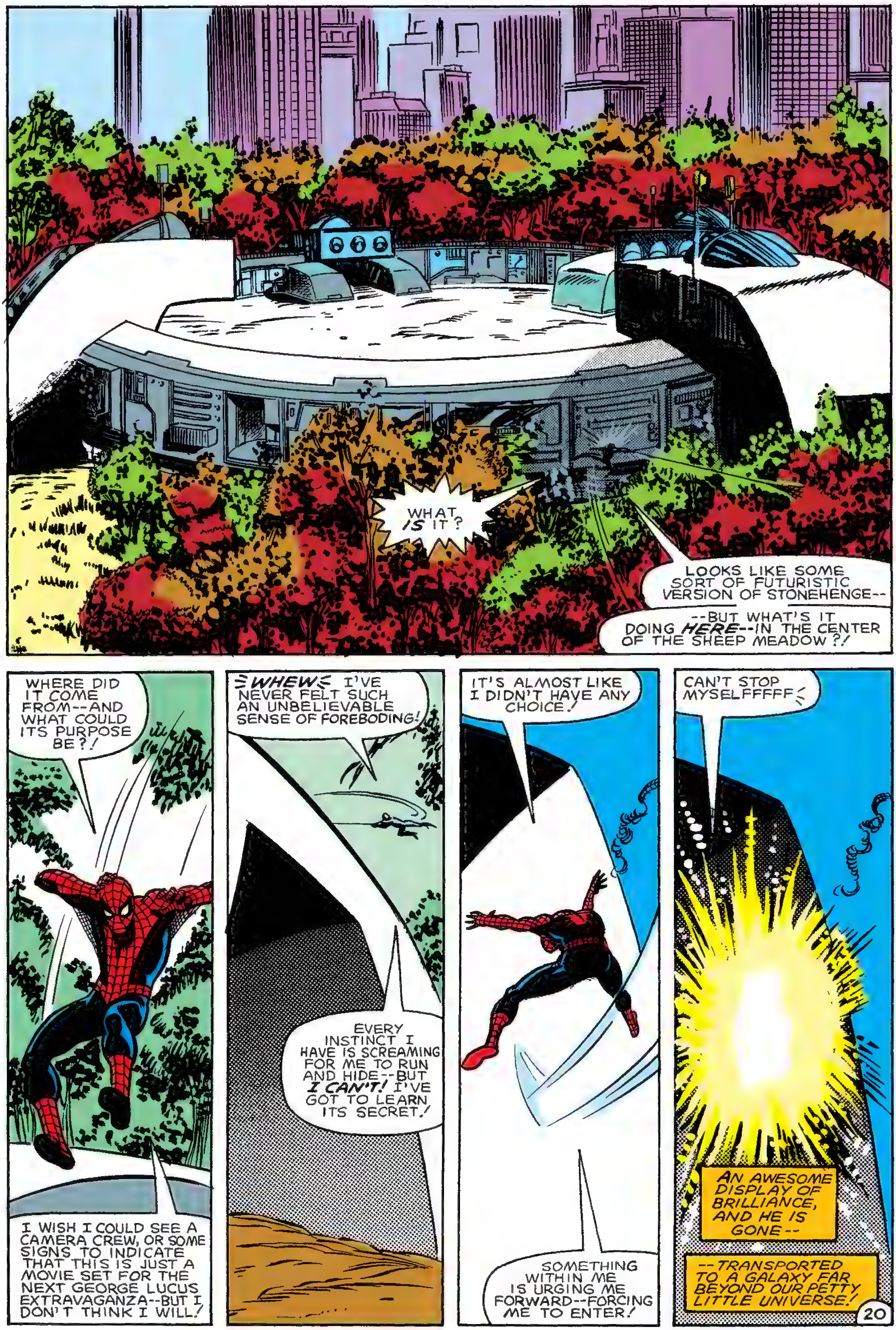

SO, *TRY*.
THE GANG TRIES.
THEY ARE LESS THAN SUCCESSFUL.
MEANWHILE, ELSEWHERE IN THE AGING EDIFICE...
THE RAT I'M CHASING KNOWS EVERY TWIST AND TURN OF THIS MOLDY MAZE!
BUT THERE'S NO RULE THAT SAYS I CAN'T CHANGE THE LAYOUT, USING MY WEBBING TO UNDERTAKE A LITTLE URBAN RENEWAL!
THWIP
END OF THE LINE, EFFENDI!
THERE'S MORE THAN *ONE* WAY OUT OF THIS RAT TRAP, WEB-SLINGER--
--AND I'M TAKING IT!
SKRASH!

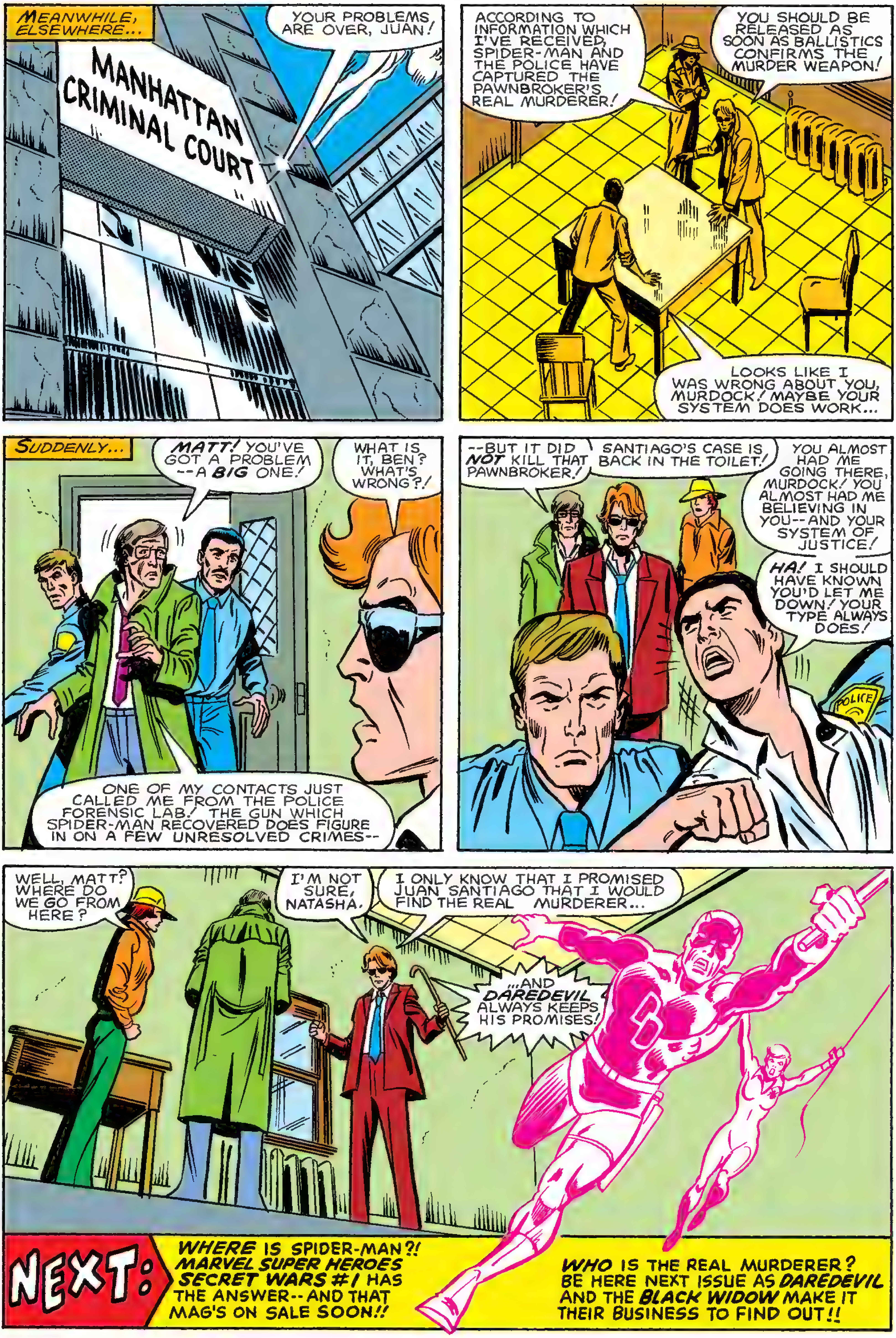

UH-OH! HE MANAGED TO GET BACK ON HIS FEET BEFORE I COULD LEAP THE LENGTH OF THE HALLWAY!
I'LL STOP HIM WITH MY WIDOW'S CABLE!
NO! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS! HE MIGHT SHOOT ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE DOWN THERE!
OH, NO! HE'S TAKING THAT FAMILY HOSTAGE-- AND FORCING THEM INTO THAT CAR!
C'MON, WIDOW!
WE CAN'T LOSE HIM NOW!
VROOM!
FLOOR IT! GET THIS CRATE MOVING!
I CAN'T GO NO FASTER, MAN, I JUST GOT MY LICENSE LAST WEEK --AND I AIN'T THAT GOOD A DRIVER!
WHAT--?!?
STOP THE CAR--NOW!
SCREECH!
GET OUT! I'M TAKING THE WHEEL!
W-WHAT ABOUT US--?!
GET OUT, LADY! I DON'T NEED YOU NO MORE!
UNNN
WITHOUT A MOMENT'S HESITATION, THE TERRIFIED WOMAN LEAPS FROM THE CAR, BUT THEN...
WAIT! MY DAUGHTER IS STILL INSIDE--!
THAT'S RIGHT, LADY! SHE'S STAYING WITH ME!
NO ONE'S GONNA MESS WITH ME WHILE I'VE STILL GOT THIS LITTLE GIRL!

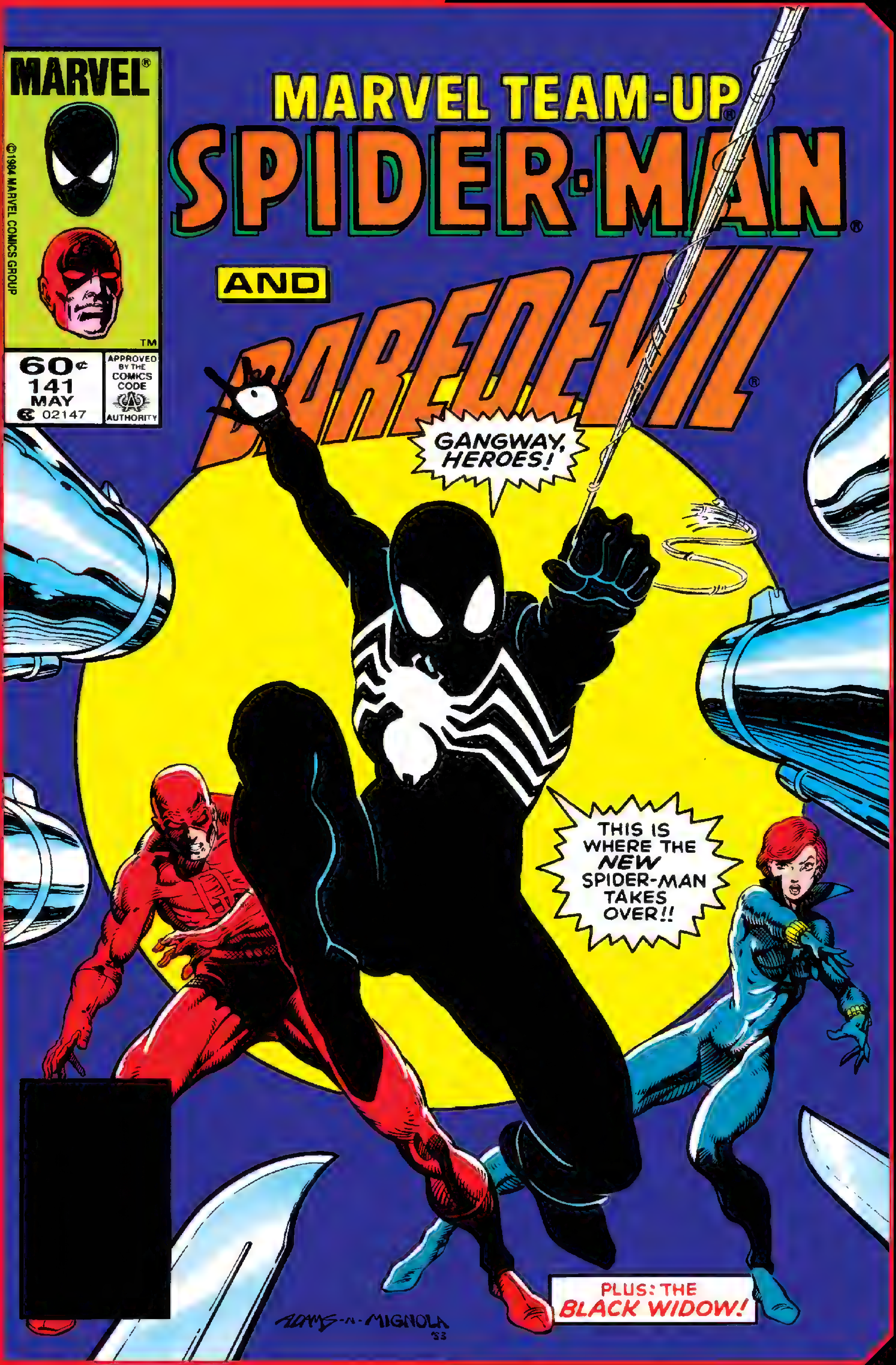

INSTANTLY, THE CAR LURCHES FORWARD, AS THE YOUNG GANG MEMBER JAMS HIS FOOT UPON THE ACCELERATOR! AND THEN...
HE'S RACING INTO CENTRAL PARK! HE MUST THINK HE CAN LOSE ME AS SOON AS I RUN OUT OF BUILDINGS TO SWING FROM--
"--BUT HE'S WRONG!"
THAT LIGHT!
SCREEE
SPIDER-MAN MUST BE GETTING READY TO CLOSE IN!
C-CAN'T LET HIM RATTLE ME! HE'S JUST A MAN-- HE'S JUST A--OH, NO! I'M SWERVIN' OFF THE ROAD!--
--CRASHIN' OVER THE BRIDGE!
KEE
RASHH!
SPLOOSH!
OH, GOD!
I--I PANICKED HIM!
IT'S MY FAULT HE LOST CONTROL OF HIS CAR!


GOT TO GET HIM AND THE GIRL OUT OF THAT SINKING WRECK!
ONE DESPERATE MOMENT LATER...
UNNN! HAD TO RIP THE DOOR RIGHT OFF ITS FRAME-- BUT IT LOOKS LIKE I ARRIVED IN TIME!
I THINK THEY'LL BOTH MAKE IT... IF I CAN JUST GET THEM TO THE SURFACE... BEFORE THEIR AIR GIVES OUT!
SECONDS LATER...
THE POLICE SHOULD BE HERE SOON--BUT I'VE STILL GOT WORK TO DO!
CAN'T STOP--CAN'T REST--UNTIL I FIND THAT PUNK'S GUN! MATT MURDOCK NEEDS IT TO PROVE HIS CLIENT'S INNOCENCE!
AH-HA! I THINK I SEE IT NOW--
--ON THE FLOOR BENEATH THE DRIVER'S SEAT!
GOT IT!
SOON...
HOW IS THE LITTLE GIRL?
SHE'S GOING TO BE FINE! THEY JUST WANT TO TAKE HER TO THE HOSPITAL FOR OBSERVATION!
I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY A COUPLE OF HEAVY-WEIGHTS LIKE YOU TWO WERE CHASING A COMMON STREET PUNK!
IT'S VERY SIMPLE, OFFICER! WE BELIEVE THAT THE KIDNAPPER'S GUN WAS USED IN A MURDER LAST NIGHT! BALLISTICS SHOULD CONFIRM OUR SUSPICIONS!


JUAN SANTIAGO WILL OWE HIS FREEDOM TO YOU, SPIDER-MAN!
YEAH... GLAD I COULD HELP.
IS SOMETHING WRONG?
I WAS JUST THINKING ABOUT THAT PAWNBROKER! HE MIGHT STILL BE ALIVE... IF I HADN'T SCREWED UP IN THE FIRST PLACE!
IT WASN'T YOUR FAULT! YOU CAN'T HOLD YOURSELF RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS DEATH!
CAN'T I?
BOUNDING TWENTY FEET AT A TIME, SPIDER-MAN IS SOON SWALLOWED BY THE NIGHT...
ONE DAY LATER, HE RETURNS TO CENTRAL PARK, TO REJOIN HIS FRIEND HARRY OSBORN FOR A VERY INTIMATE CONVERSATION.* THEN, AS THE FRIENDS PART...
*FOR DETAILS, SEE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #251 --DANNY
...SUDDENLY...
UNNN
MY SPIDER-SENSE IS GOING WILD! FEELS LIKE A BOMB IS EXPLODING WITHIN MY HEAD.
AGONY-FILLED MOMENTS LATER...
AT LAST! THE PAIN IS STARTING TO SUBSIDE! THAT'S THE THIRD MONSTER TINGLE I'VE EXPERIENCED IN THE PAST FEW DAYS*--
--BUT THIS TIME I'VE MANAGED TO PINPOINT THE SOURCE OF THE TROUBLE! IT'S COMING FROM SOMEWHERE NEARBY--IN CENTRAL PARK!
* SEE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #'S 249 & 250 --DANNY
SHORTLY...
WHATEVER'S CAUSING THESE FLASHES MUST BE REAL WEIRD... AND REAL DANGEROUS!
UNLESS MY SENSES ARE DECEIVING ME, IT SHOULD BE JUST BEYOND THIS CLUMP OF TREES!
AND THEN, ONE FRANTIC MOMENT LATER...
OMIGOSH!
THIS CAN'T BE REAL!


WHAT *IS* IT?
LOOKS LIKE SOME SORT OF FUTURISTIC VERSION OF STONEHENGE--
--BUT WHAT'S IT DOING *HERE*--IN THE CENTER OF THE SHEEP MEADOW?!
WHERE DID IT COME FROM--AND WHAT COULD ITS PURPOSE BE?!
I WISH I COULD SEE A CAMERA CREW, OR SOME SIGNS TO INDICATE THAT THIS IS JUST A MOVIE SET FOR THE NEXT GEORGE LUCUS EXTRAVAGANZA--BUT I DON'T THINK I WILL!
WHEW I'VE NEVER FELT SUCH AN UNBELIEVABLE SENSE OF FOREBODING!
EVERY INSTINCT I HAVE IS SCREAMING FOR ME TO RUN AND HIDE--BUT *I CAN'T!* I'VE GOT TO LEARN ITS SECRET!
IT'S ALMOST LIKE I DIDN'T HAVE ANY CHOICE!
SOMETHING WITHIN ME IS URGING ME FORWARD--FORCING ME TO ENTER!
CAN'T STOP MYSELFFFFF
AN AWESOME DISPLAY OF BRILLIANCE, AND HE IS GONE--
--TRANSPORTED TO A GALAXY FAR BEYOND OUR PETTY LITTLE UNIVERSE!


MEANWHILE, ELSEWHERE...
MANHATTAN CRIMINAL COURT
YOUR PROBLEMS ARE OVER, JUAN!
ACCORDING TO INFORMATION WHICH I'VE RECEIVED, SPIDER-MAN AND THE POLICE HAVE CAPTURED THE PAWNBROKER'S REAL MURDERER!
YOU SHOULD BE RELEASED AS SOON AS BALLISTICS CONFIRMS THE MURDER WEAPON!
LOOKS LIKE I WAS WRONG ABOUT YOU, MURDOCK! MAYBE YOUR SYSTEM DOES WORK...
SUDDENLY...
MATT! YOU'VE GOT A PROBLEM --A BIG ONE!
WHAT IS IT, BEN? WHAT'S WRONG?!
ONE OF MY CONTACTS JUST CALLED ME FROM THE POLICE FORENSIC LAB! THE GUN WHICH SPIDER-MAN RECOVERED DOES FIGURE IN ON A FEW UNRESOLVED CRIMES--
--BUT IT DID NOT KILL THAT PAWNBROKER!
SANTIAGO'S CASE IS BACK IN THE TOILET!
YOU ALMOST HAD ME GOING THERE, MURDOCK! YOU ALMOST HAD ME BELIEVING IN YOU--AND YOUR SYSTEM OF JUSTICE!
HA! I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN YOU'D LET ME DOWN! YOUR TYPE ALWAYS DOES!
POLICE
WELL, MATT? WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?
I'M NOT SURE, NATASHA.
I ONLY KNOW THAT I PROMISED JUAN SANTIAGO THAT I WOULD FIND THE REAL MURDERER...
...AND DAREDEVIL ALWAYS KEEPS HIS PROMISES!
NEXT:
WHERE IS SPIDER-MAN?! MARVEL SUPER HEROES SECRET WARS #1 HAS THE ANSWER--AND THAT MAG'S ON SALE SOON!!
WHO IS THE REAL MURDERER? BE HERE NEXT ISSUE AS DAREDEVIL AND THE BLACK WIDOW MAKE IT THEIR BUSINESS TO FIND OUT!!


MARVEL
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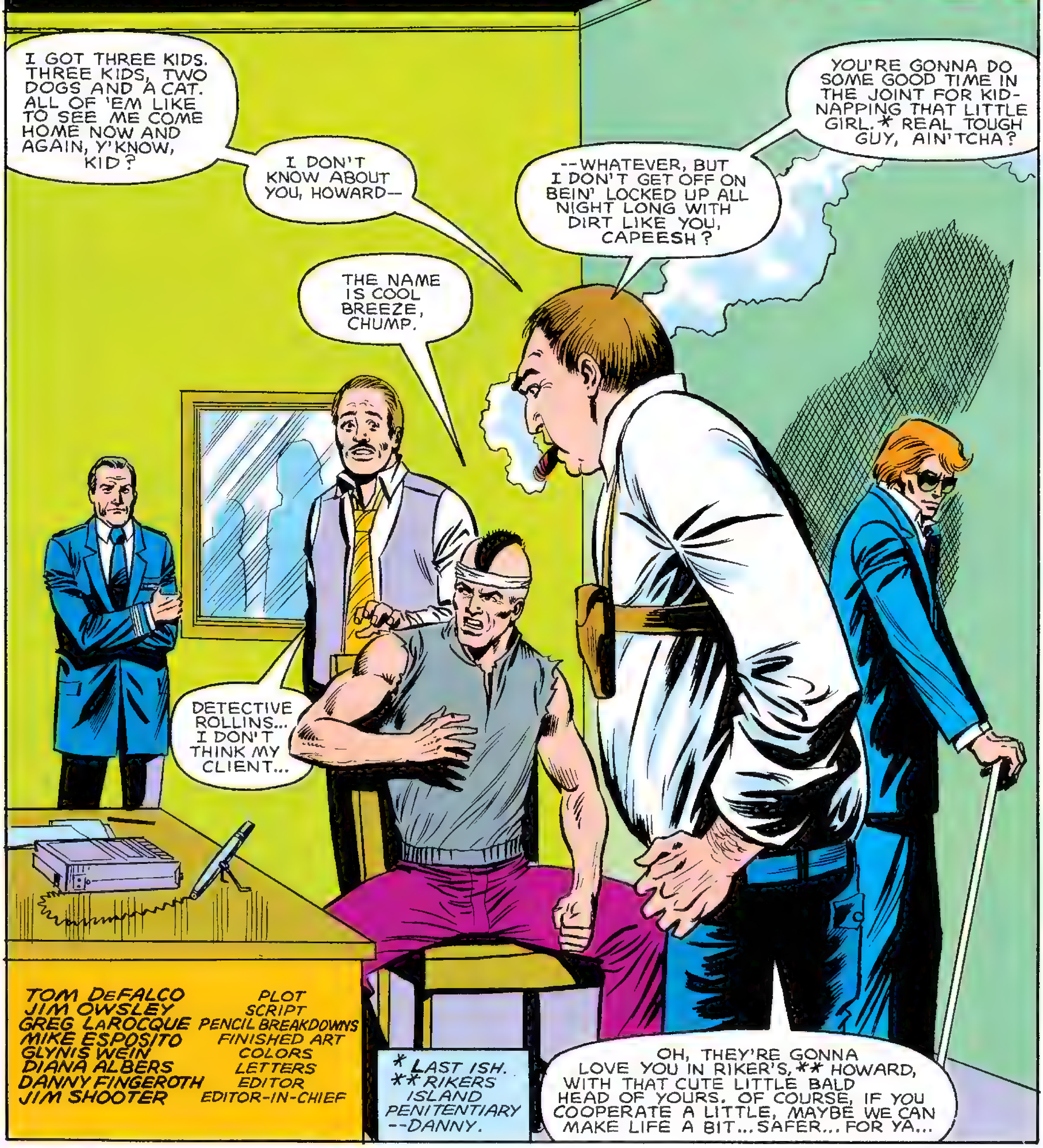
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
MARVEL TEAM-UP
SPIDER-MAN
AND
DAREDEVIL
GANGWAY, HEROES!
THIS IS WHERE THE NEW SPIDER-MAN TAKES OVER!!
PLUS: THE BLACK WIDOW!
ADAMS-N-MIGNOLA '83

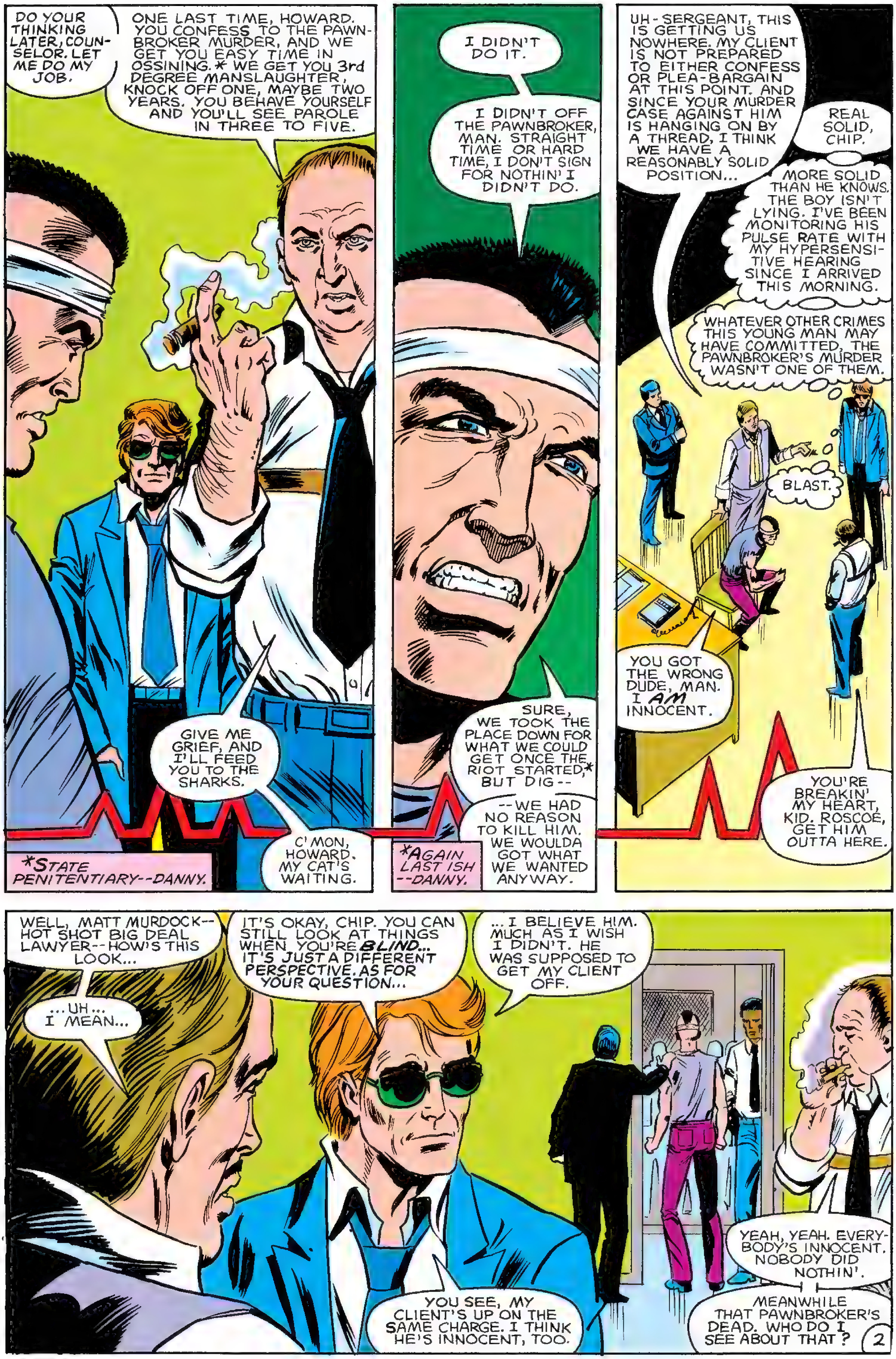
Stan Lee PRESENTS: SPIDER-MAN AND DAREDEVIL

BLIND JUSTICE!

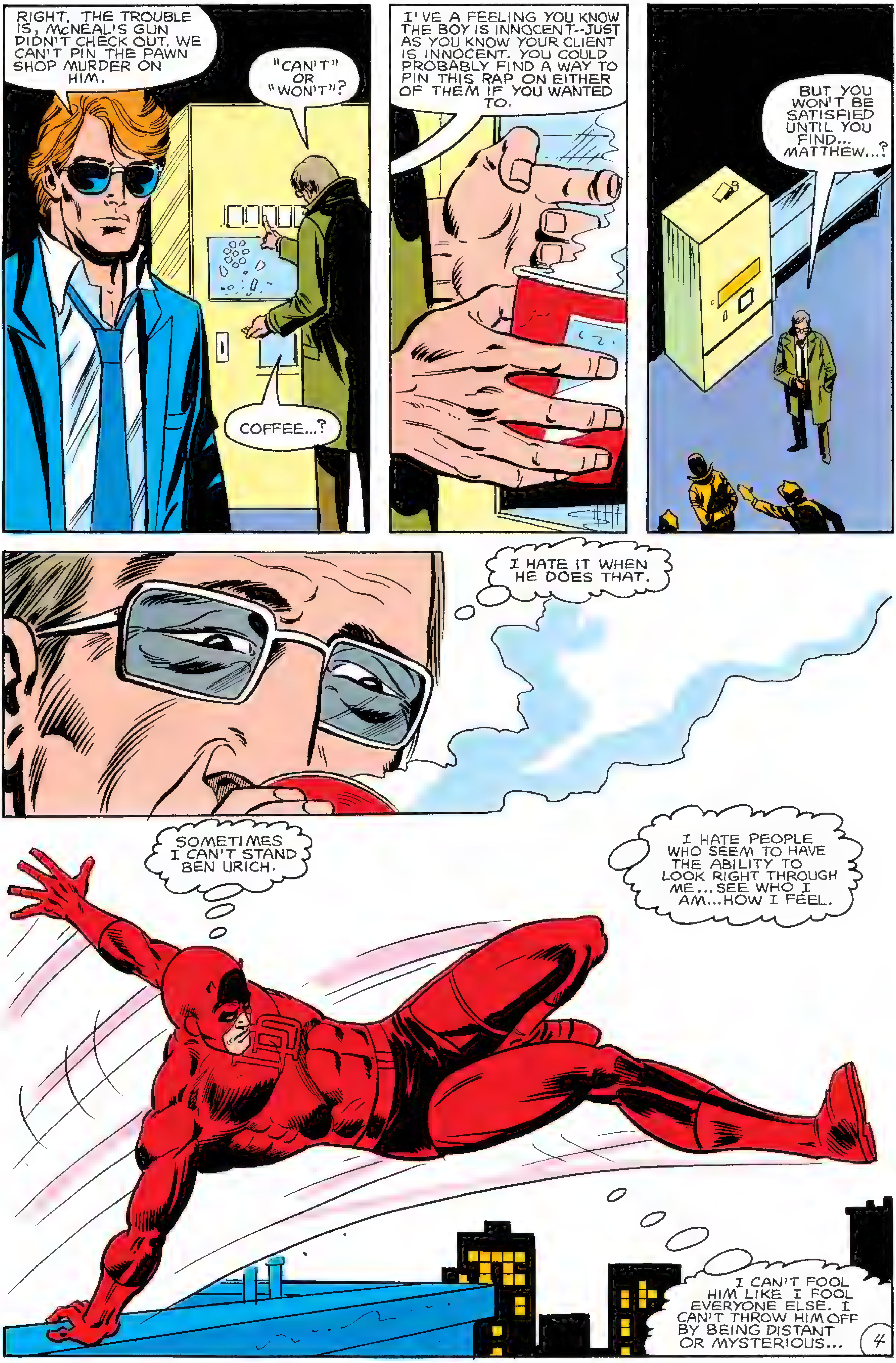

I GOT THREE KIDS. THREE KIDS, TWO DOGS AND A CAT. ALL OF 'EM LIKE TO SEE ME COME HOME NOW AND AGAIN, Y'KNOW, KID?
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, HOWARD--
--WHATEVER, BUT I DON'T GET OFF ON BEIN' LOCKED UP ALL NIGHT LONG WITH DIRT LIKE YOU, CAPEESH?
YOU'RE GONNA DO SOME GOOD TIME IN THE JOINT FOR KIDNAPPING THAT LITTLE GIRL.* REAL TOUGH GUY, AIN'TCHA?
THE NAME IS COOL BREEZE, CHUMP.
DETECTIVE ROLLINS... I DON'T THINK MY CLIENT...
OH, THEY'RE GONNA LOVE YOU IN RIKER'S,** HOWARD, WITH THAT CUTE LITTLE BALD HEAD OF YOURS. OF COURSE, IF YOU COOPERATE A LITTLE, MAYBE WE CAN MAKE LIFE A BIT... SAFER... FOR YA...

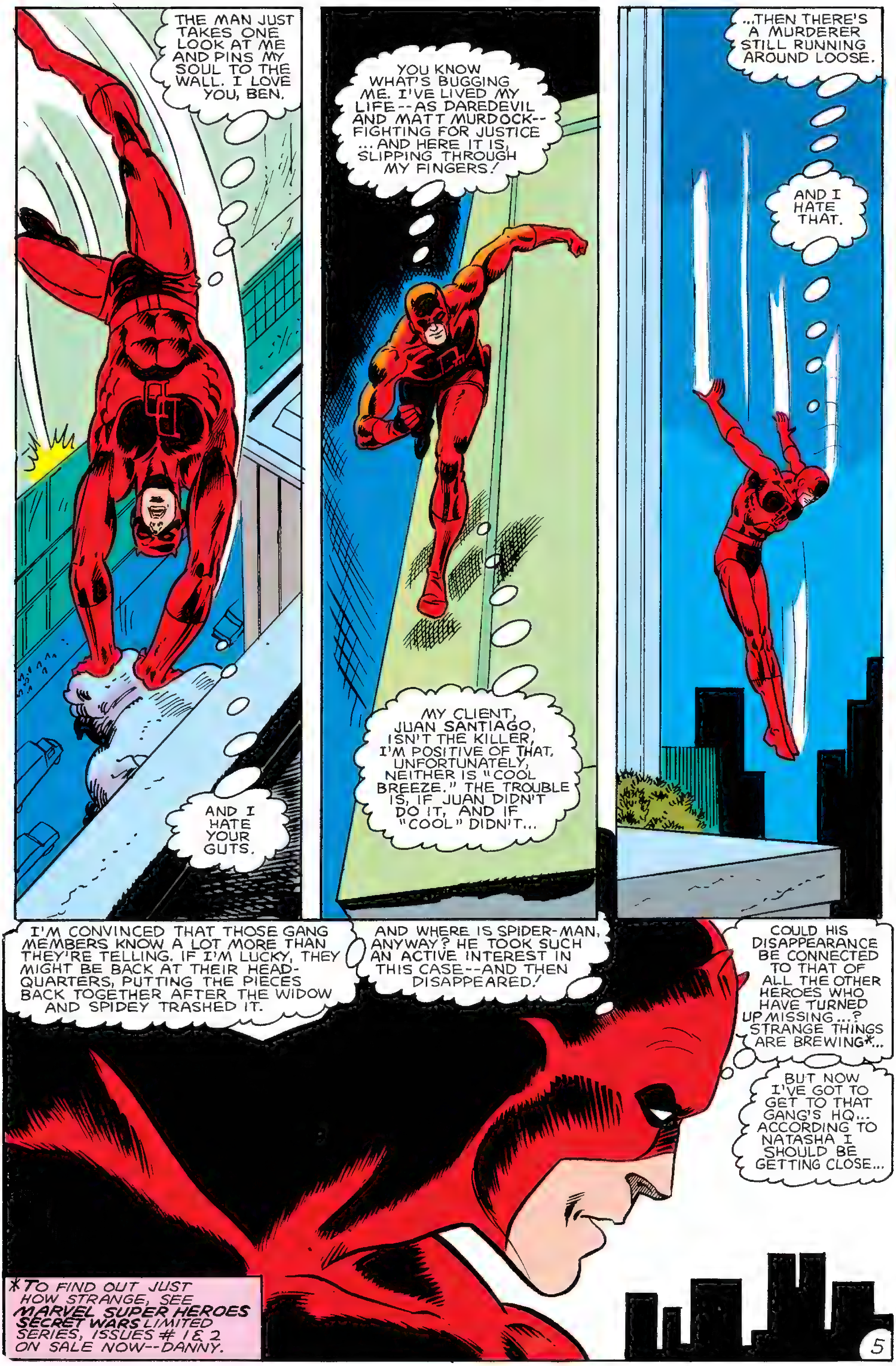
TOM DeFALCO PLOT
JIM OWSLEY SCRIPT
GREG LaROCQUE PENCIL BREAKDOWNS
MIKE ESPOSITO FINISHED ART
GLYNIS WEIN COLORS
DIANA ALBERS LETTERS
DANNY FINGEROTH EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

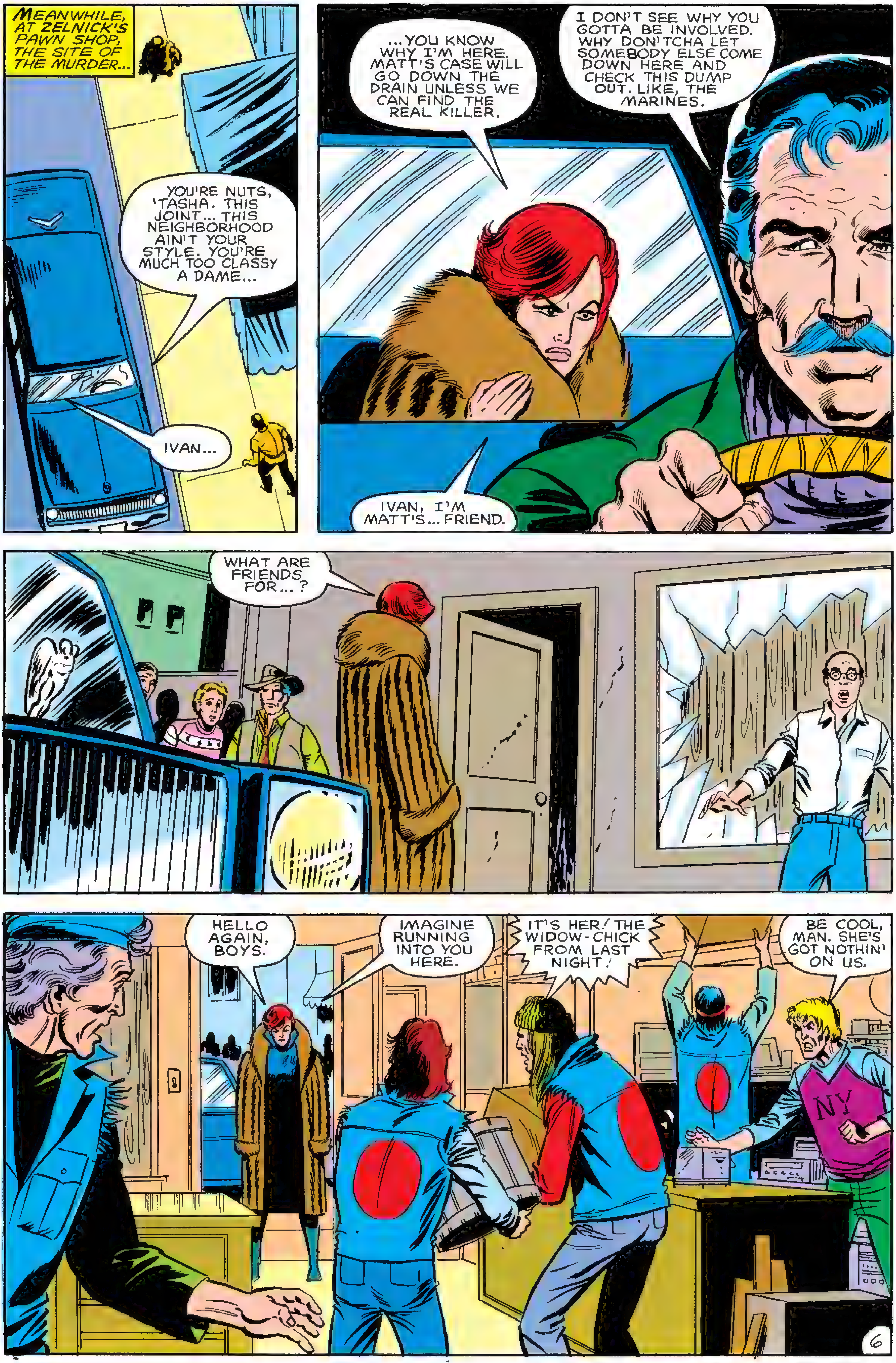
* LAST ISH.
** RIKERS ISLAND PENITENTIARY --DANNY.

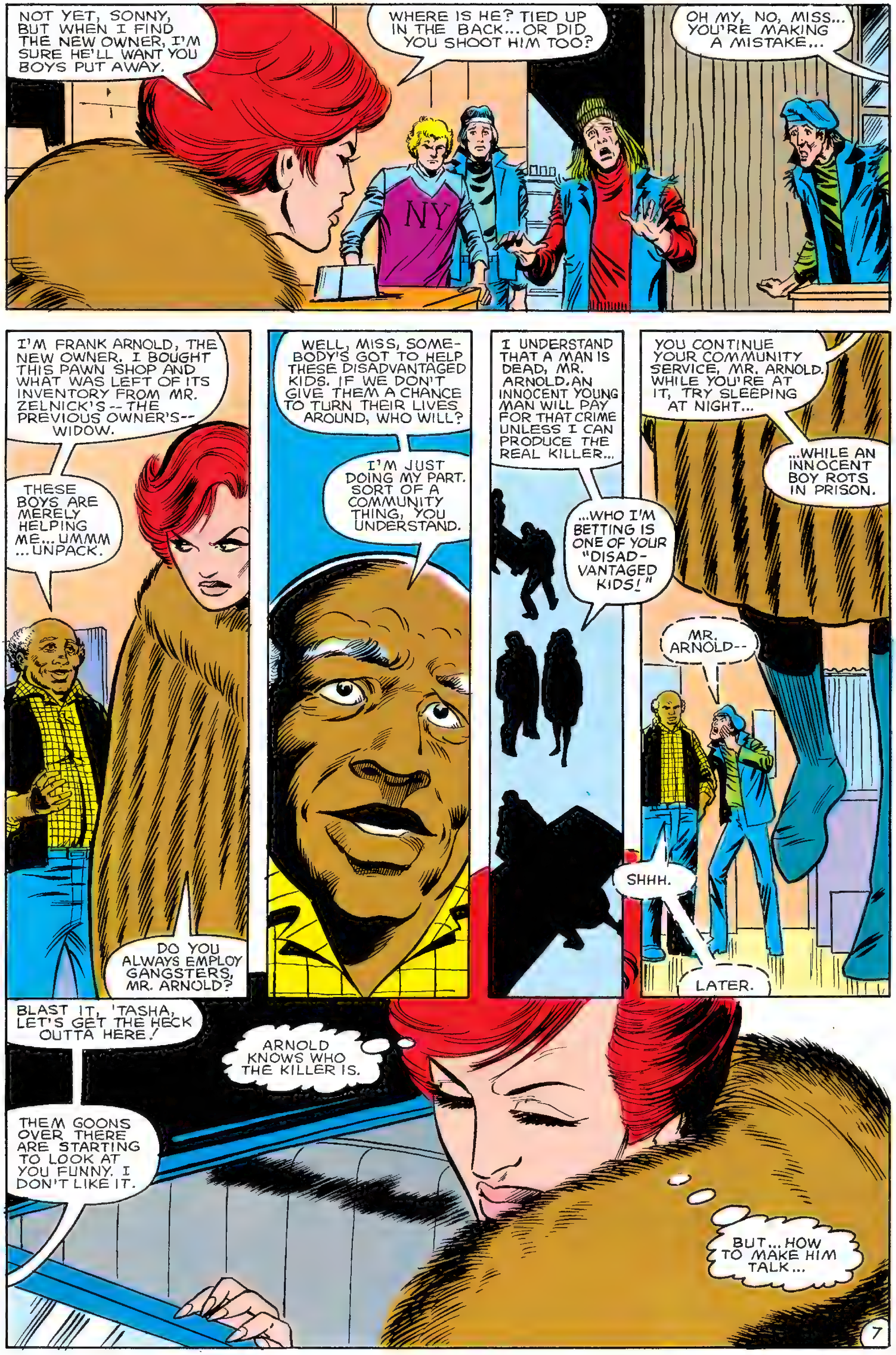

DO YOUR THINKING LATER, COUNSELOR. LET ME DO MY JOB.
ONE LAST TIME, HOWARD. YOU CONFESS TO THE PAWNBROKER MURDER, AND WE GET YOU EASY TIME IN OSSINING.* WE GET YOU 3rd DEGREE MANSLAUGHTER, KNOCK OFF ONE, MAYBE TWO YEARS. YOU BEHAVE YOURSELF AND YOU'LL SEE PAROLE IN THREE TO FIVE.
GIVE ME GRIEF, AND I'LL FEED YOU TO THE SHARKS.
C'MON, HOWARD. MY CAT'S WAITING.
*STATE PENITENTIARY--DANNY.
I DIDN'T DO IT.
I DIDN'T OFF THE PAWNBROKER, MAN. STRAIGHT TIME OR HARD TIME, I DON'T SIGN FOR NOTHIN' I DIDN'T DO.
SURE, WE TOOK THE PLACE DOWN FOR WHAT WE COULD GET ONCE THE RIOT STARTED,* BUT DIG--
--WE HAD NO REASON TO KILL HIM. WE WOULDA GOT WHAT WE WANTED ANYWAY.
*AGAIN LAST ISH --DANNY.
UH-SERGEANT, THIS IS GETTING US NOWHERE. MY CLIENT IS NOT PREPARED TO EITHER CONFESS OR PLEA-BARGAIN AT THIS POINT. AND SINCE YOUR MURDER CASE AGAINST HIM IS HANGING ON BY A THREAD, I THINK WE HAVE A REASONABLY SOLID POSITION...
REAL SOLID, CHIP.
MORE SOLID THAN HE KNOWS. THE BOY ISN'T LYING. I'VE BEEN MONITORING HIS PULSE RATE WITH MY HYPERSENSITIVE HEARING SINCE I ARRIVED THIS MORNING.
WHATEVER OTHER CRIMES THIS YOUNG MAN MAY HAVE COMMITTED, THE PAWNBROKER'S MURDER WASN'T ONE OF THEM.
BLAST.
YOU GOT THE WRONG DUDE, MAN. I *AM* INNOCENT.
YOU'RE BREAKIN' MY HEART, KID. ROSCOE, GET HIM OUTTA HERE.
WELL, MATT MURDOCK--HOT SHOT BIG DEAL LAWYER--HOW'S THIS LOOK...
...UH... I MEAN...
IT'S OKAY, CHIP. YOU CAN STILL LOOK AT THINGS WHEN YOU'RE *BLIND...* IT'S JUST A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE. AS FOR YOUR QUESTION...
...I BELIEVE HIM. MUCH AS I WISH I DIDN'T. HE WAS SUPPOSED TO GET MY CLIENT OFF.
YOU SEE, MY CLIENT'S UP ON THE SAME CHARGE. I THINK HE'S INNOCENT, TOO.
YEAH, YEAH. EVERYBODY'S INNOCENT. NOBODY DID NOTHIN'.
MEANWHILE THAT PAWNBROKER'S DEAD. WHO DO I SEE ABOUT THAT?

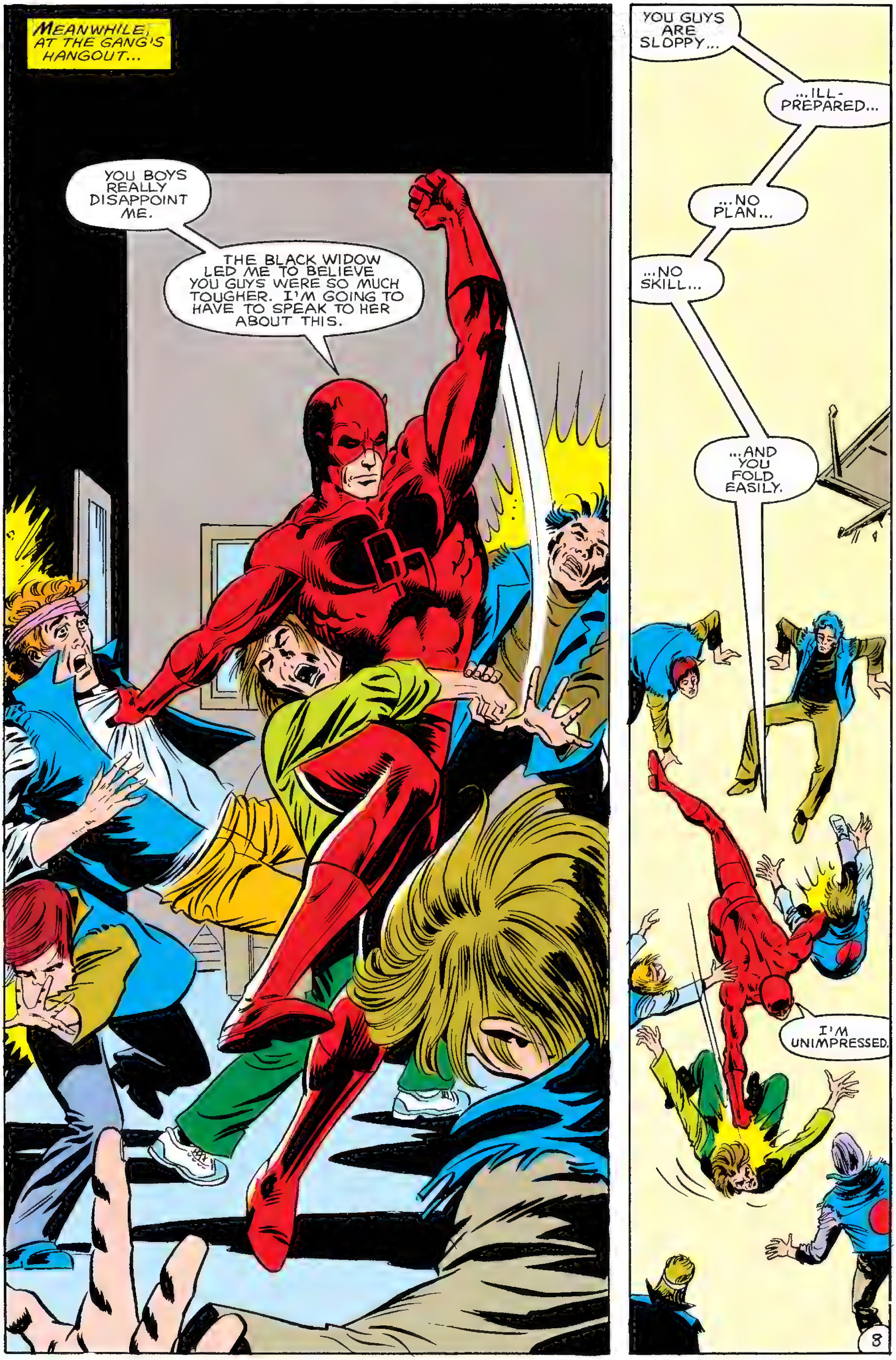
LOOK, MATT-- THIS ISN'T LIKE WHEN WE WERE IN LAW SCHOOL TOGETHER. WE NEVER LOST ONE, REMEMBER?
LIFE IN THE REAL WORLD IS JUST A BIT TOUGHER. I THINK OUR CLIENTS ARE GOING TO BE CELL-MATES.
DON'T GIVE UP YET, CHIP. I'M NOT.
HOW GOES IT, MATTHEW?
THAT BAD, EH?
MY PAPER WANTS TO DUMP THIS STORY SOMEWHERE ON PAGE 118 AND SEND ME OFF TO COVER THE WOMEN'S MUD WRESTLING FINALS IN BAYONNE!
WHAT DID YOU TELL THEM, BEN?
"LET'S SEE IF I'VE GOT THIS STRAIGHT, MATT. THAT BLACKOUT TWO NIGHTS AGO TOUCHED OFF A MINI-RIOT AT A LOCAL PAWN SHOP. SPIDER-MAN INTERVENED...
"... TOO LATE TO PROTECT THE PAWNBROKER FROM A BULLET FIRED BY SOMEONE HIDDEN WITHIN THE CROWD. BASED ON SOME CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE, YOUR CLIENT, ONE JUAN SANTIAGO, WAS PICKED OUT OF THAT CROWD...
"... AND CHARGED WITH THE CRIME. YOU YOURSELF WERE PRESSED INTO DEFENDING THE YOUNG MAN. THE COPS HAD CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE... AND LOTS OF "EYE-WITNESS" TESTIMONY...
"...WHICH THE KID AND HIS FAMILY ALL CLAIM WAS FALSE!
NOTHIN'. I CALLED IN SICK. OLD NEWSHOUNDS LIKE ME ARE A BIT OUTDATED PERHAPS, BUT WHEN WE STUMBLE ONTO A STORY WE STICK WITH IT.
CASE IN POINT: LOOK HOW LONG IT TOOK ME TO DISCOVER YOU WERE "THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR". BUT I DID IT.*
KEEP IT DOWN, WILL YOU, BEN?
THERE'S NOBODY AROUND. BUT YOU ALREADY KNOW THAT, DON'T YOU?
*SOME TIME AGO, REPORTER BEN ULRICH DISCOVERED THAT MATT IS DAREDEVIL--DANNY.
"YOU ENLISTED THE AID OF YOUR EX-GIRLFRIEND NATASHA ROMANOVA--A/K/A THE BLACK WIDOW--TO TRACK DOWN THE STREET GANG THAT WAS THE PRIMARY CATALYST IN THE PAWN-SHOP LOOTING AND THAT YOUR CLIENT CLAIMED WAS BEHIND ALL THIS FALSE TESTIMONY.
"AT THIS POINT, ENTER OUR BOY HOWARD 'COOL BREEZE' McNEAL--OWNER OF THE ALLEGED MURDER WEAPON.
"A BRIEF KIDNAPPING/CHASE, AND McNEAL WAS BROUGHT IN."
3

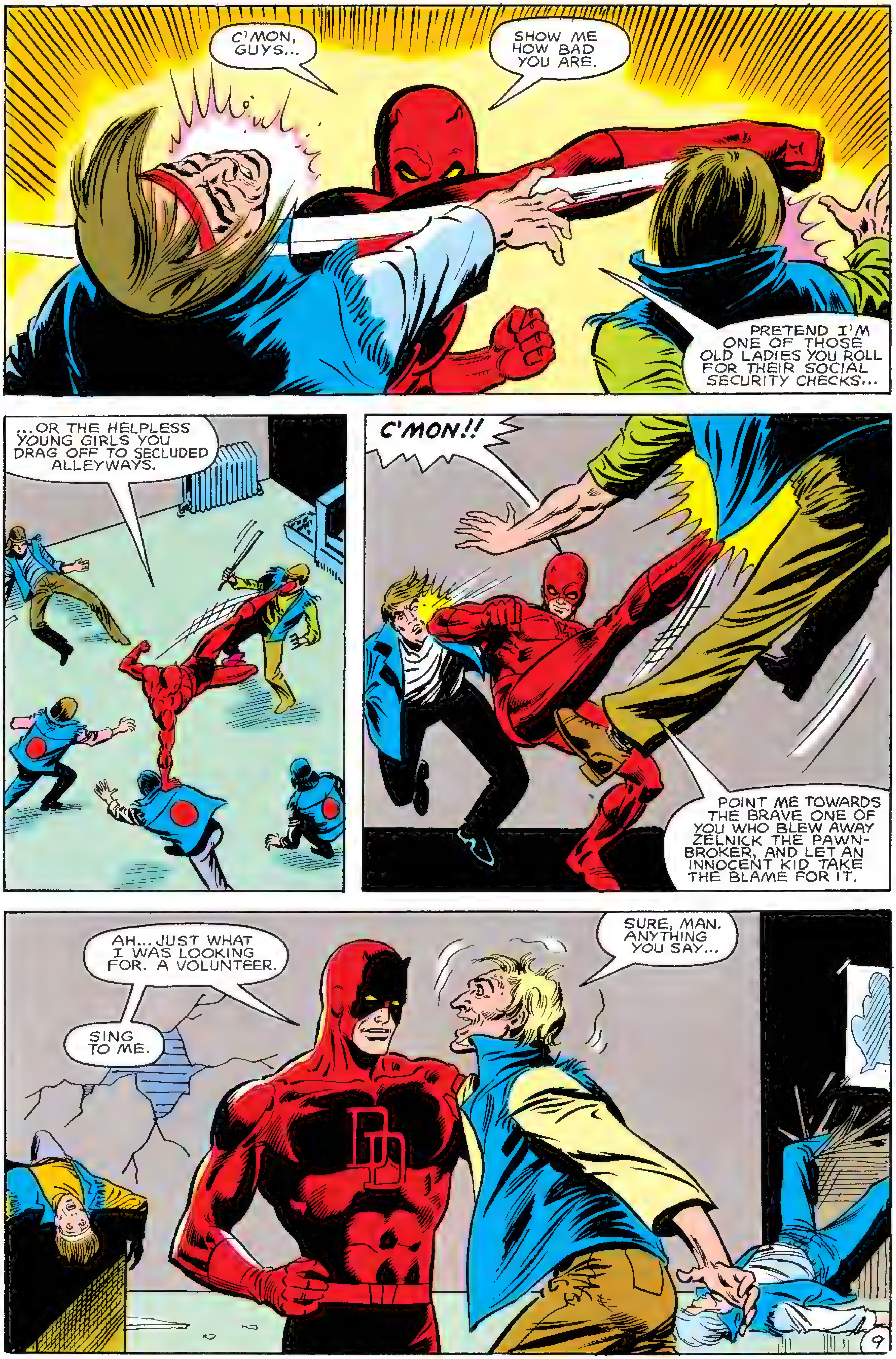

RIGHT. THE TROUBLE IS, McNEAL'S GUN DIDN'T CHECK OUT. WE CAN'T PIN THE PAWN SHOP MURDER ON HIM.
"CAN'T" OR "WON'T"?
COFFEE...?
I'VE A FEELING YOU KNOW THE BOY IS INNOCENT--JUST AS YOU KNOW YOUR CLIENT IS INNOCENT. YOU COULD PROBABLY FIND A WAY TO PIN THIS RAP ON EITHER OF THEM IF YOU WANTED TO.
BUT YOU WON'T BE SATISFIED UNTIL YOU FIND... MATTHEW...?
I HATE IT WHEN HE DOES THAT.
SOMETIMES I CAN'T STAND BEN URICH.
I HATE PEOPLE WHO SEEM TO HAVE THE ABILITY TO LOOK RIGHT THROUGH ME... SEE WHO I AM... HOW I FEEL.
I CAN'T FOOL HIM LIKE I FOOL EVERYONE ELSE. I CAN'T THROW HIM OFF BY BEING DISTANT OR MYSTERIOUS...

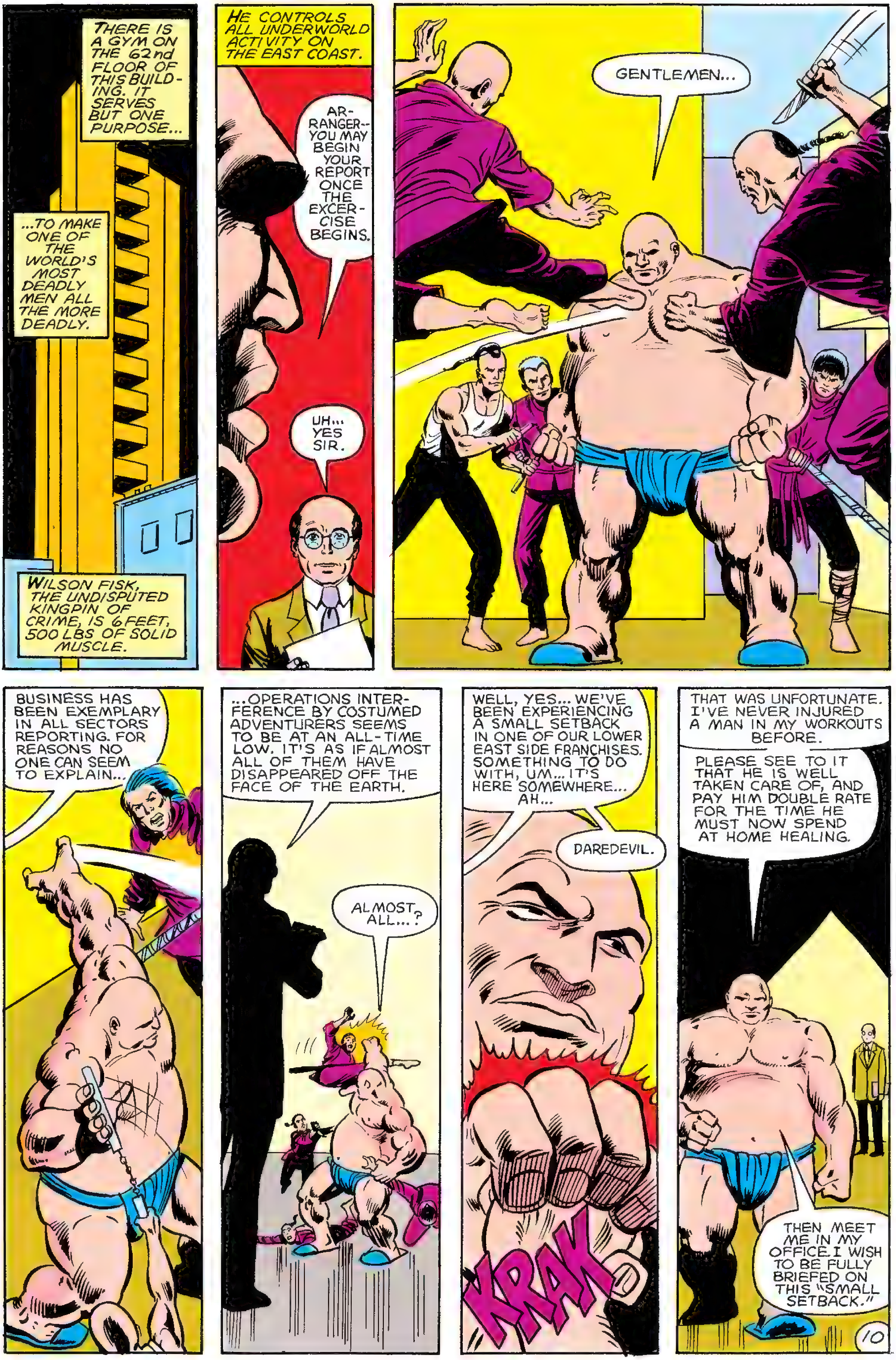

THE MAN JUST TAKES ONE LOOK AT ME AND PINS MY SOUL TO THE WALL. I LOVE YOU, BEN.
AND I HATE YOUR GUTS.
YOU KNOW WHAT'S BUGGING ME. I'VE LIVED MY LIFE--AS DAREDEVIL AND MATT MURDOCK--FIGHTING FOR JUSTICE ...AND HERE IT IS, SLIPPING THROUGH MY FINGERS!
MY CLIENT, JUAN SANTIAGO, ISN'T THE KILLER, I'M POSITIVE OF THAT. UNFORTUNATELY, NEITHER IS "COOL BREEZE." THE TROUBLE IS, IF JUAN DIDN'T DO IT, AND IF "COOL" DIDN'T...
...THEN THERE'S A MURDERER STILL RUNNING AROUND LOOSE.
AND I HATE THAT.
I'M CONVINCED THAT THOSE GANG MEMBERS KNOW A LOT MORE THAN THEY'RE TELLING. IF I'M LUCKY, THEY MIGHT BE BACK AT THEIR HEADQUARTERS, PUTTING THE PIECES BACK TOGETHER AFTER THE WIDOW AND SPIDEY TRASHED IT.
AND WHERE IS SPIDER-MAN, ANYWAY? HE TOOK SUCH AN ACTIVE INTEREST IN THIS CASE--AND THEN DISAPPEARED!
COULD HIS DISAPPEARANCE BE CONNECTED TO THAT OF ALL THE OTHER HEROES WHO HAVE TURNED UP MISSING...? STRANGE THINGS ARE BREWING*...
BUT NOW I'VE GOT TO GET TO THAT GANG'S HQ... ACCORDING TO NATASHA I SHOULD BE GETTING CLOSE...
*TO FIND OUT JUST HOW STRANGE, SEE MARVEL SUPER HEROES SECRET WARS LIMITED SERIES, ISSUES # 1 & 2 ON SALE NOW--DANNY.

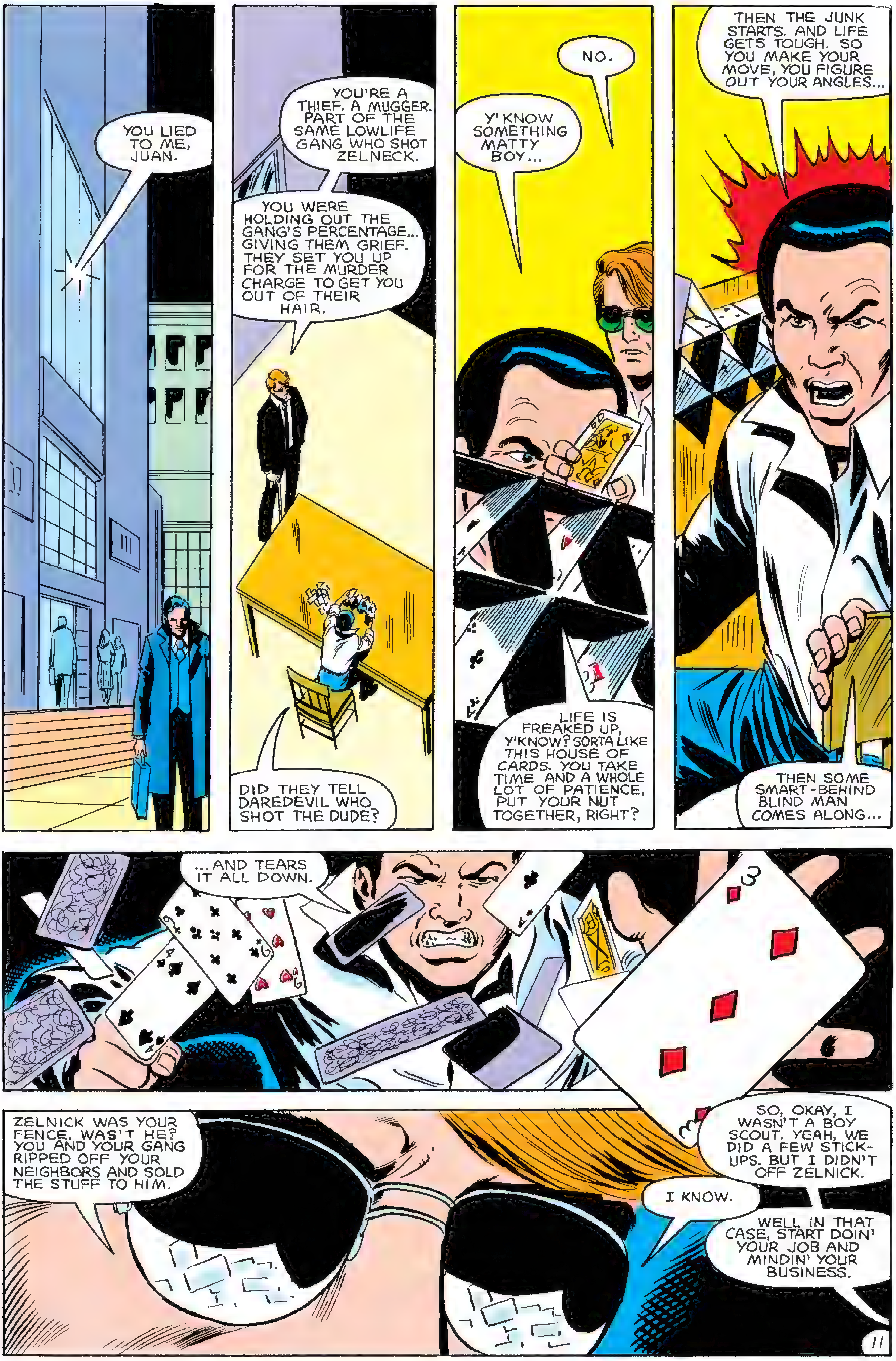

MEANWHILE, AT ZELNICK'S PAWN SHOP, THE SITE OF THE MURDER...
YOU'RE NUTS, 'TASHA. THIS JOINT... THIS NEIGHBORHOOD AIN'T YOUR STYLE. YOU'RE MUCH TOO CLASSY A DAME...
IVAN...
...YOU KNOW WHY I'M HERE. MATT'S CASE WILL GO DOWN THE DRAIN UNLESS WE CAN FIND THE REAL KILLER.
I DON'T SEE WHY YOU GOTTA BE INVOLVED. WHY DON'TCHA LET SOMEBODY ELSE COME DOWN HERE AND CHECK THIS DUMP OUT. LIKE, THE MARINES.
IVAN, I'M MATT'S... FRIEND.
WHAT ARE FRIENDS FOR...?
HELLO AGAIN, BOYS.
IMAGINE RUNNING INTO YOU HERE.
IT'S HER! THE WIDOW-CHICK FROM LAST NIGHT!
BE COOL, MAN. SHE'S GOT NOTHIN' ON US.
NY
6

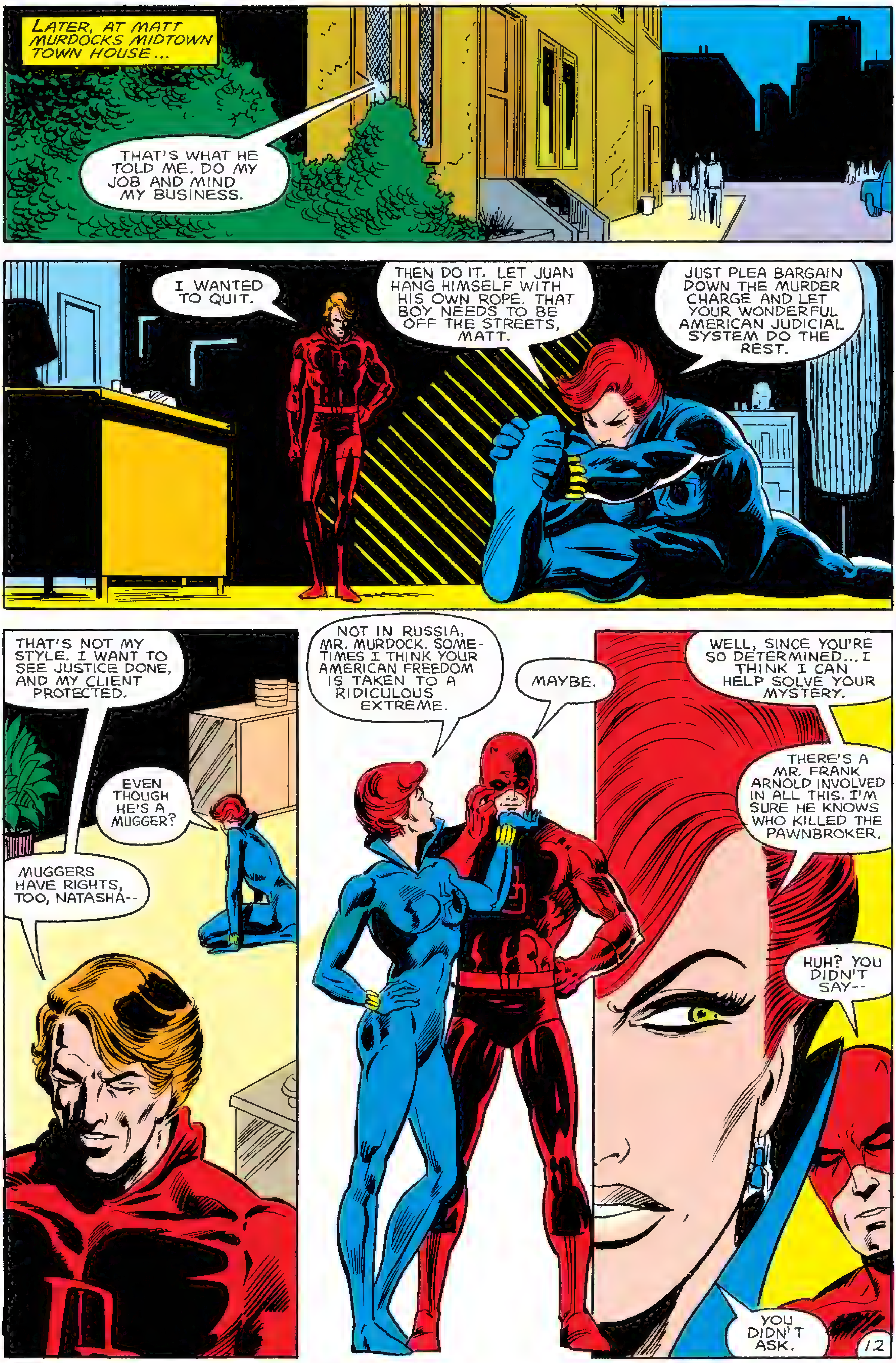

NOT YET, SONNY, BUT WHEN I FIND THE NEW OWNER, I'M SURE HE'LL WANT YOU BOYS PUT AWAY.
WHERE IS HE? TIED UP IN THE BACK...OR DID YOU SHOOT HIM TOO?
OH MY, NO, MISS... YOU'RE MAKING A MISTAKE...
NY
I'M FRANK ARNOLD, THE NEW OWNER. I BOUGHT THIS PAWN SHOP AND WHAT WAS LEFT OF ITS INVENTORY FROM MR. ZELNICK'S -- THE PREVIOUS OWNER'S-- WIDOW.
THESE BOYS ARE MERELY HELPING ME... UMMM ...UNPACK.
DO YOU ALWAYS EMPLOY GANGSTERS, MR. ARNOLD?
WELL, MISS, SOMEBODY'S GOT TO HELP THESE DISADVANTAGED KIDS. IF WE DON'T GIVE THEM A CHANCE TO TURN THEIR LIVES AROUND, WHO WILL?
I'M JUST DOING MY PART. SORT OF A COMMUNITY THING, YOU UNDERSTAND.
I UNDERSTAND THAT A MAN IS DEAD, MR. ARNOLD. AN INNOCENT YOUNG MAN WILL PAY FOR THAT CRIME UNLESS I CAN PRODUCE THE REAL KILLER...
...WHO I'M BETTING IS ONE OF YOUR "DISADVANTAGED KIDS!"
YOU CONTINUE YOUR COMMUNITY SERVICE, MR. ARNOLD. WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, TRY SLEEPING AT NIGHT...
...WHILE AN INNOCENT BOY ROTS IN PRISON.
MR. ARNOLD--
SHHH.
LATER.
BLAST IT, 'TASHA, LET'S GET THE HECK OUTTA HERE!
THEM GOONS OVER THERE ARE STARTING TO LOOK AT YOU FUNNY. I DON'T LIKE IT.
ARNOLD KNOWS WHO THE KILLER IS.
BUT... HOW TO MAKE HIM TALK...

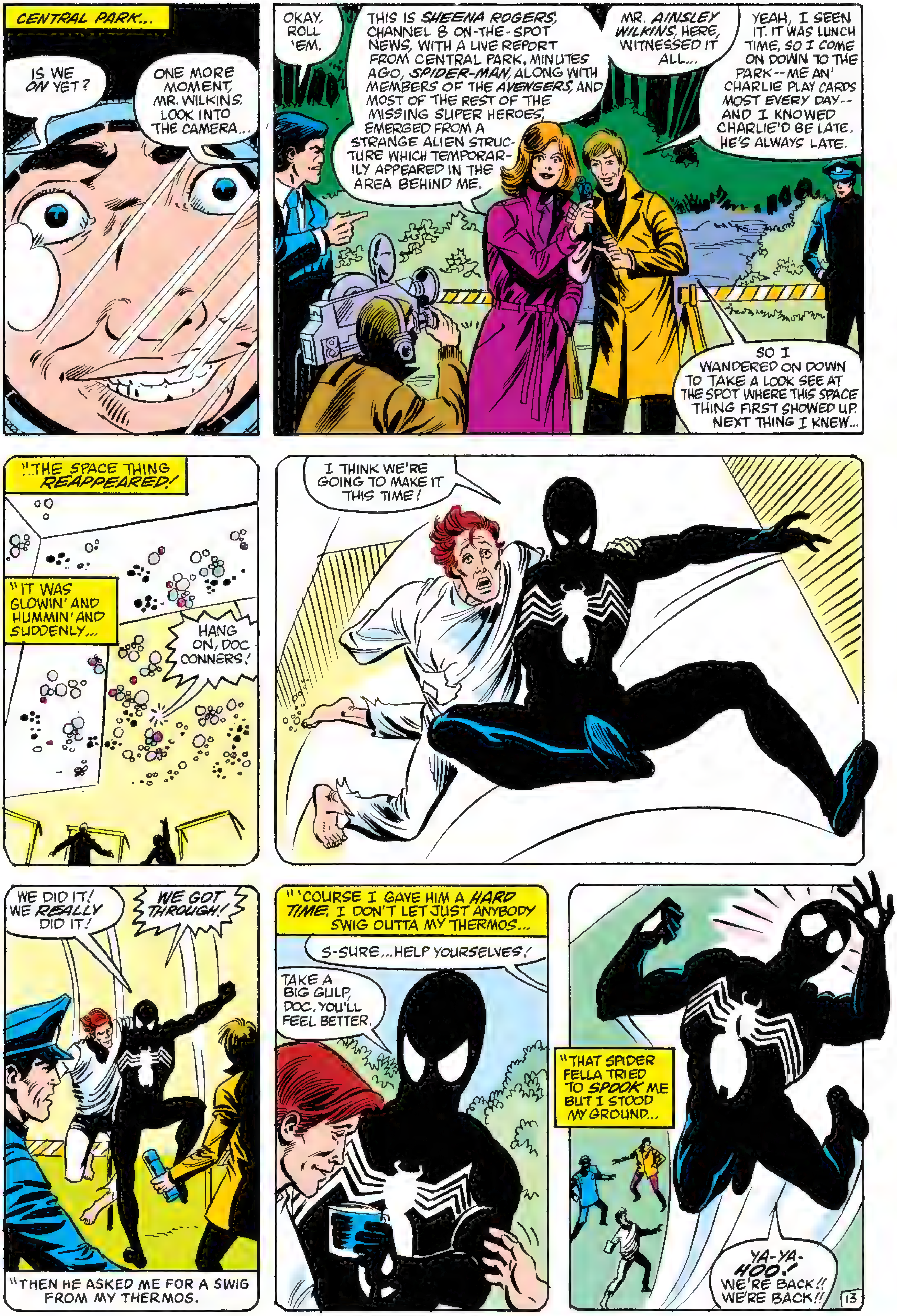

MEANWHILE, AT THE GANG'S HANGOUT...
YOU BOYS REALLY DISAPPOINT ME.
THE BLACK WIDOW LED ME TO BELIEVE YOU GUYS WERE SO MUCH TOUGHER. I'M GOING TO HAVE TO SPEAK TO HER ABOUT THIS.
YOU GUYS ARE SLOPPY...
...ILL-PREPARED...
...NO PLAN...
...NO SKILL...
...AND YOU FOLD EASILY.
I'M UNIMPRESSED.

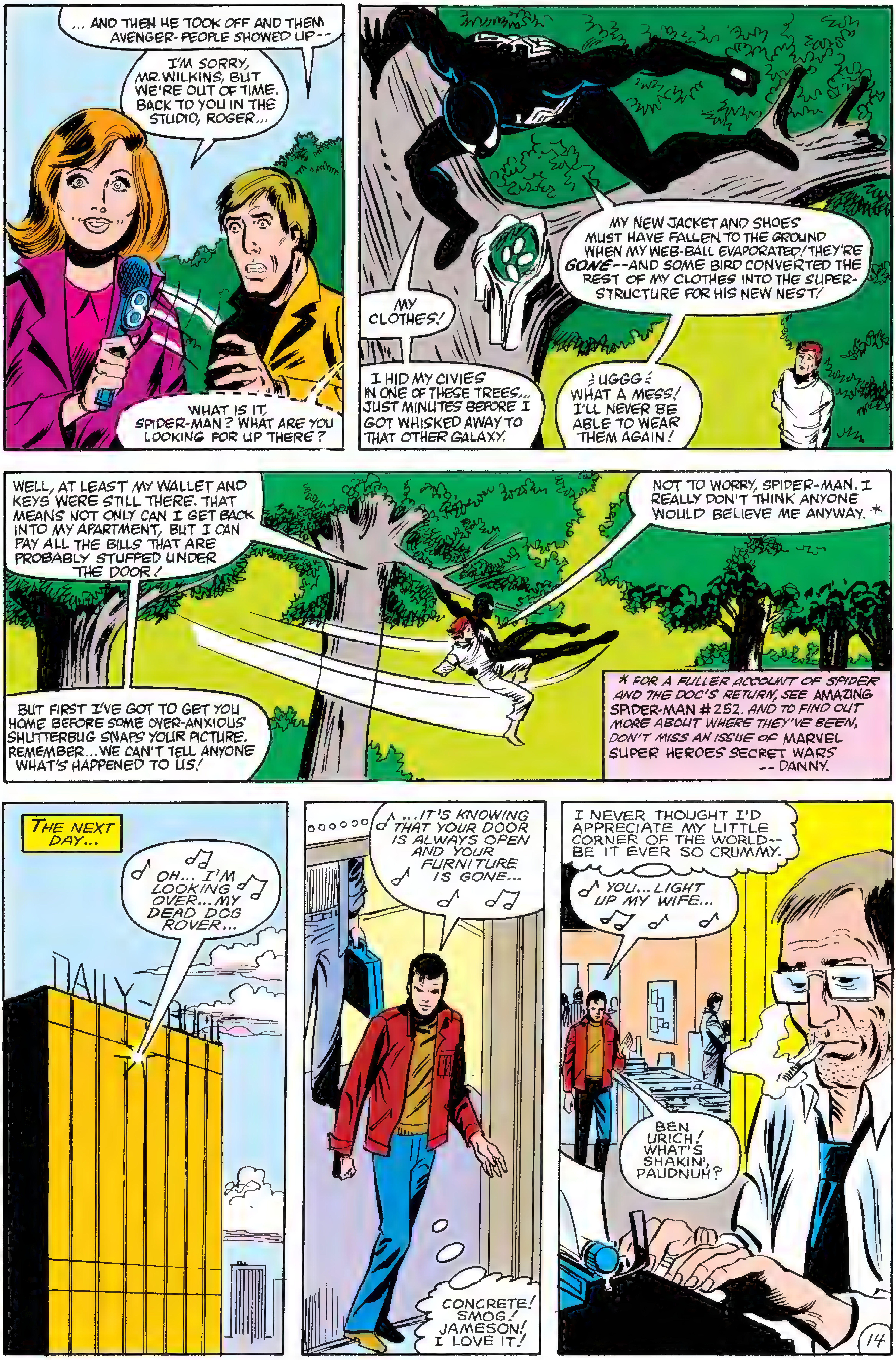

C'MON, GUYS...
SHOW ME HOW BAD YOU ARE.
PRETEND I'M ONE OF THOSE OLD LADIES YOU ROLL FOR THEIR SOCIAL SECURITY CHECKS...
...OR THE HELPLESS YOUNG GIRLS YOU DRAG OFF TO SECLUDED ALLEYWAYS.
C'MON!!
POINT ME TOWARDS THE BRAVE ONE OF YOU WHO BLEW AWAY ZELNICK THE PAWN-BROKER, AND LET AN INNOCENT KID TAKE THE BLAME FOR IT.
AH... JUST WHAT I WAS LOOKING FOR. A VOLUNTEER.
SING TO ME.
SURE, MAN. ANYTHING YOU SAY...

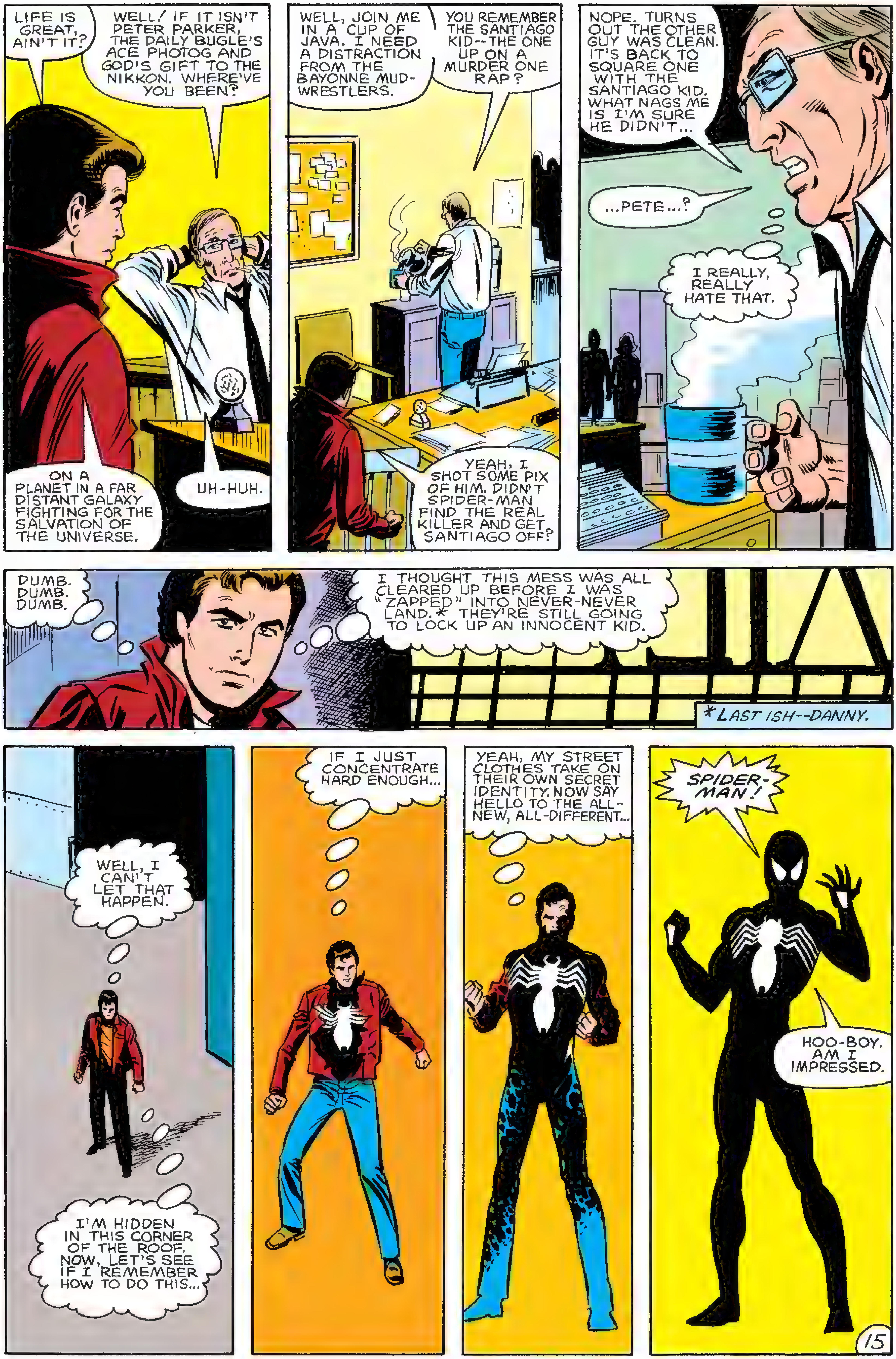

THERE IS A GYM ON THE 62nd FLOOR OF THIS BUILDING. IT SERVES BUT ONE PURPOSE...
...TO MAKE ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST DEADLY MEN ALL THE MORE DEADLY.
WILSON FISK, THE UNDISPUTED KINGPIN OF CRIME, IS 6 FEET, 500 LBS OF SOLID MUSCLE.
HE CONTROLS ALL UNDERWORLD ACTIVITY ON THE EAST COAST.
ARRANGER--YOU MAY BEGIN YOUR REPORT ONCE THE EXCERCISE BEGINS.
UH... YES SIR.
GENTLEMEN...
BUSINESS HAS BEEN EXEMPLARY IN ALL SECTORS REPORTING. FOR REASONS NO ONE CAN SEEM TO EXPLAIN...
...OPERATIONS INTERFERENCE BY COSTUMED ADVENTURERS SEEMS TO BE AT AN ALL-TIME LOW. IT'S AS IF ALMOST ALL OF THEM HAVE DISAPPEARED OFF THE FACE OF THE EARTH.
ALMOST ALL...?
WELL, YES... WE'VE BEEN EXPERIENCING A SMALL SETBACK IN ONE OF OUR LOWER EAST SIDE FRANCHISES. SOMETHING TO DO WITH, UM... IT'S HERE SOMEWHERE... AH...
DAREDEVIL.
KRAK
THAT WAS UNFORTUNATE. I'VE NEVER INJURED A MAN IN MY WORKOUTS BEFORE.
PLEASE SEE TO IT THAT HE IS WELL TAKEN CARE OF, AND PAY HIM DOUBLE RATE FOR THE TIME HE MUST NOW SPEND AT HOME HEALING.
THEN MEET ME IN MY OFFICE. I WISH TO BE FULLY BRIEFED ON THIS "SMALL SETBACK."

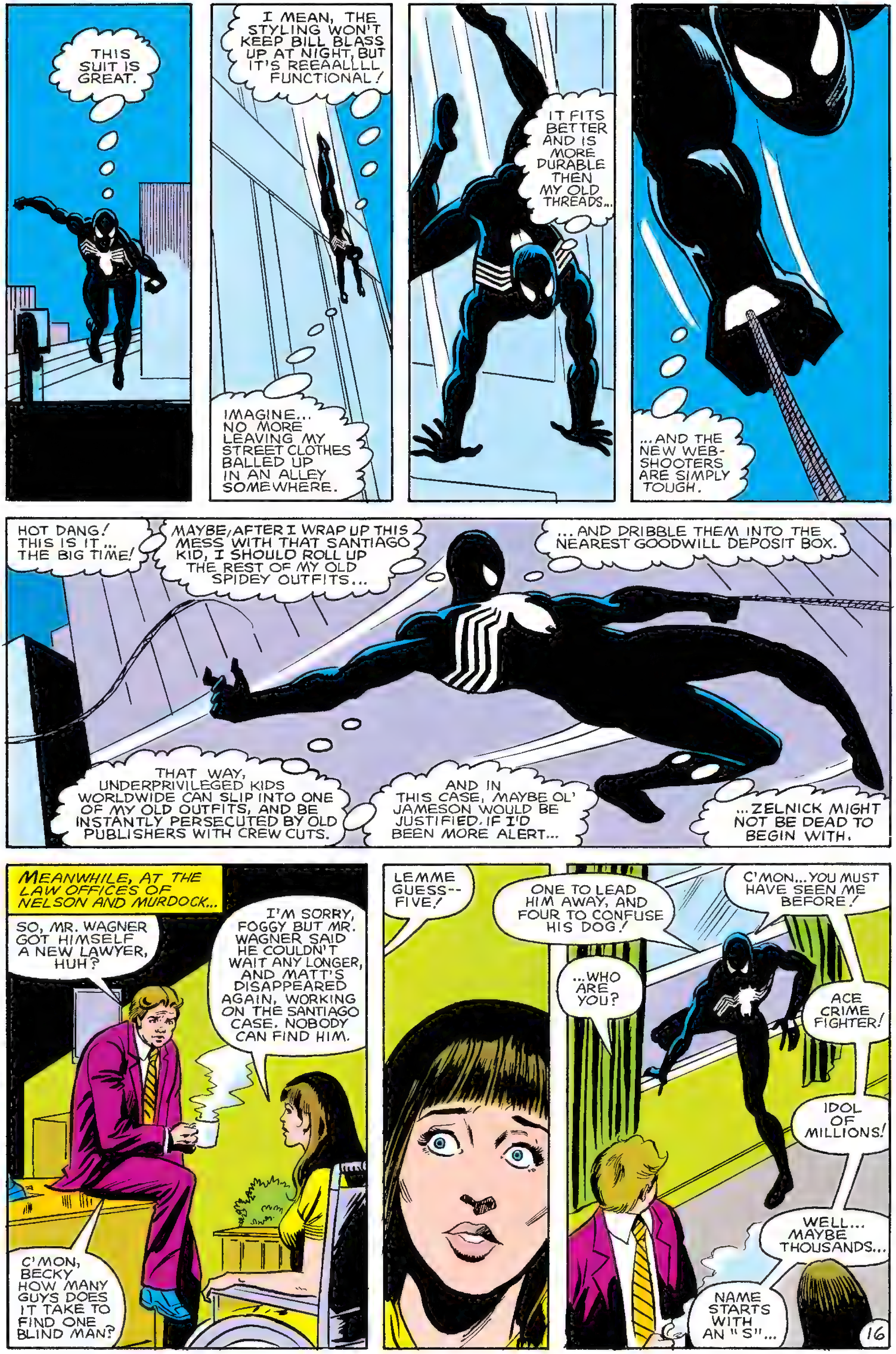

YOU LIED TO ME, JUAN.
YOU'RE A THIEF. A MUGGER. PART OF THE SAME LOWLIFE GANG WHO SHOT ZELNECK.
YOU WERE HOLDING OUT THE GANG'S PERCENTAGE... GIVING THEM GRIEF. THEY SET YOU UP FOR THE MURDER CHARGE TO GET YOU OUT OF THEIR HAIR.
DID THEY TELL DAREDEVIL WHO SHOT THE DUDE?
NO.
Y' KNOW SOMETHING MATTY BOY...
LIFE IS FREAKED UP, Y'KNOW? SORTA LIKE THIS HOUSE OF CARDS. YOU TAKE TIME AND A WHOLE LOT OF PATIENCE, PUT YOUR NUT TOGETHER, RIGHT?
THEN THE JUNK STARTS. AND LIFE GETS TOUGH. SO YOU MAKE YOUR MOVE, YOU FIGURE OUT YOUR ANGLES...
THEN SOME SMART-BEHIND BLIND MAN COMES ALONG...
...AND TEARS IT ALL DOWN.
ZELNICK WAS YOUR FENCE, WAS'T HE? YOU AND YOUR GANG RIPPED OFF YOUR NEIGHBORS AND SOLD THE STUFF TO HIM.
SO, OKAY, I WASN'T A BOY SCOUT. YEAH, WE DID A FEW STICK-UPS. BUT I DIDN'T OFF ZELNICK.
I KNOW.
WELL IN THAT CASE, START DOIN' YOUR JOB AND MINDIN' YOUR BUSINESS.

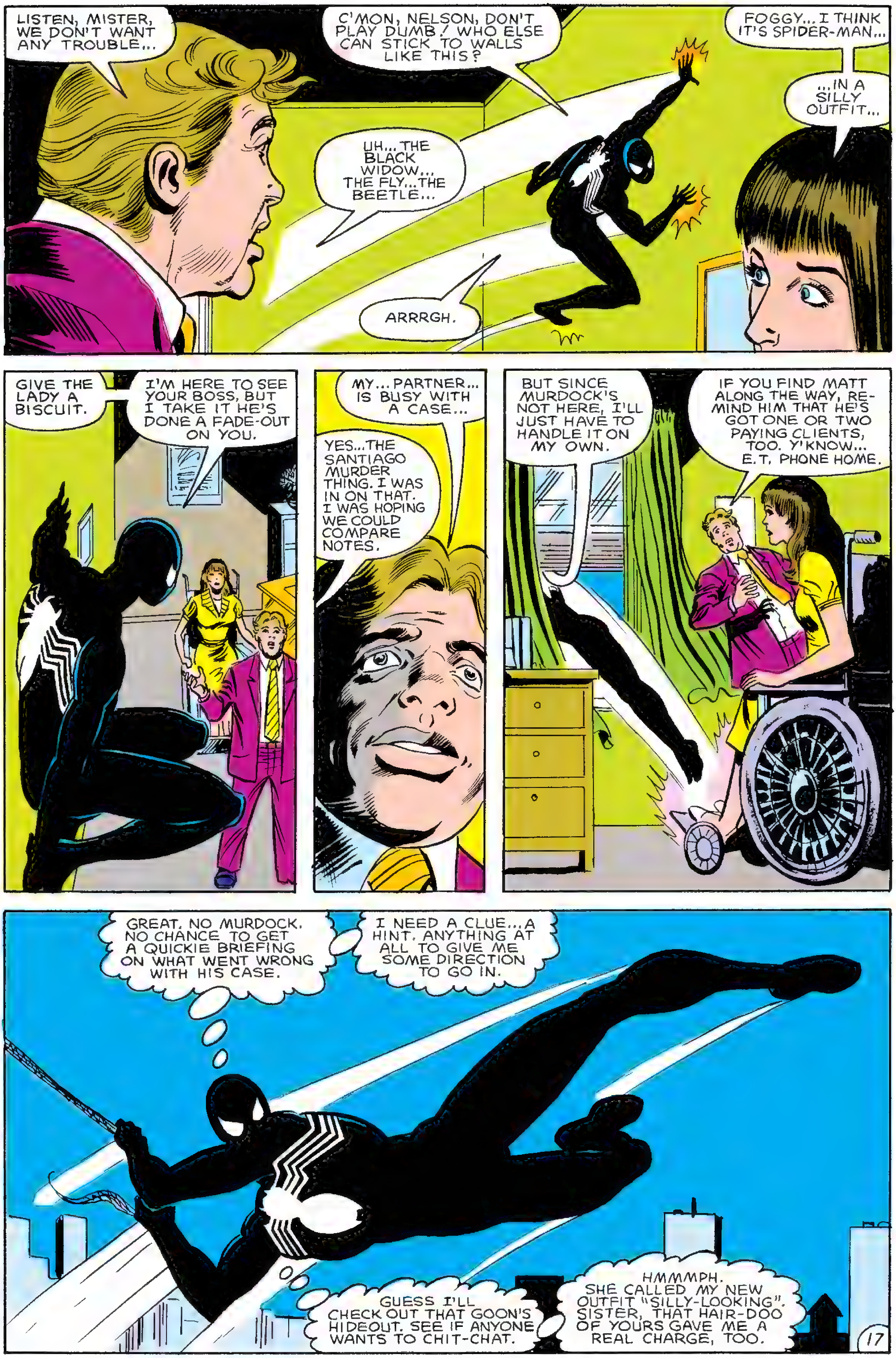

LATER, AT MATT MURDOCKS MIDTOWN TOWN HOUSE...
THAT'S WHAT HE TOLD ME. DO MY JOB AND MIND MY BUSINESS.
I WANTED TO QUIT.
THEN DO IT. LET JUAN HANG HIMSELF WITH HIS OWN ROPE. THAT BOY NEEDS TO BE OFF THE STREETS, MATT.
JUST PLEA BARGAIN DOWN THE MURDER CHARGE AND LET YOUR WONDERFUL AMERICAN JUDICIAL SYSTEM DO THE REST.
THAT'S NOT MY STYLE. I WANT TO SEE JUSTICE DONE, AND MY CLIENT PROTECTED.
EVEN THOUGH HE'S A MUGGER?
MUGGERS HAVE RIGHTS, TOO, NATASHA--
NOT IN RUSSIA, MR. MURDOCK. SOMETIMES I THINK YOUR AMERICAN FREEDOM IS TAKEN TO A RIDICULOUS EXTREME.
MAYBE.
WELL, SINCE YOU'RE SO DETERMINED... I THINK I CAN HELP SOLVE YOUR MYSTERY.
THERE'S A MR. FRANK ARNOLD INVOLVED IN ALL THIS. I'M SURE HE KNOWS WHO KILLED THE PAWNBROKER.
HUH? YOU DIDN'T SAY--
YOU DIDN'T ASK.

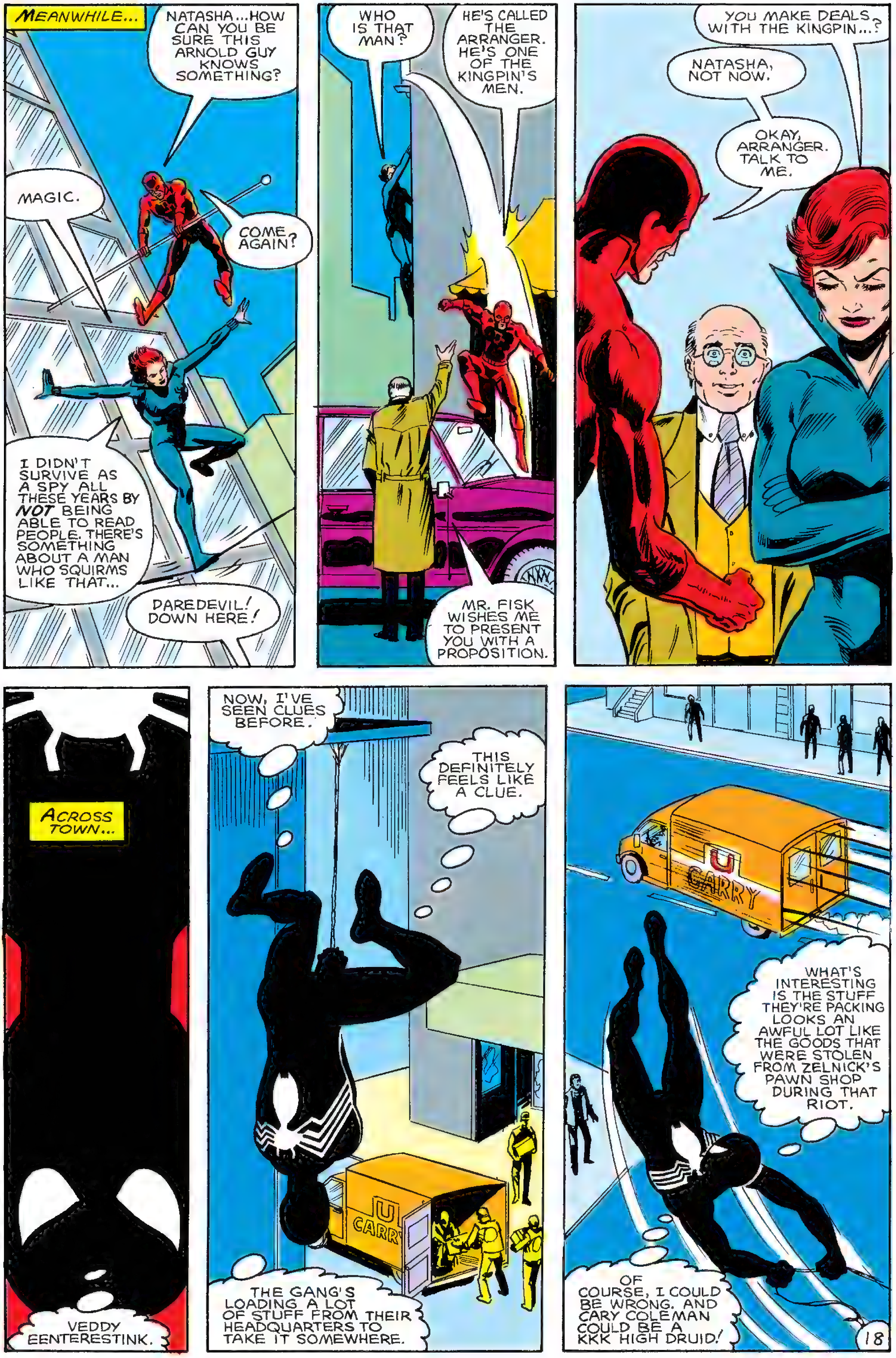

CENTRAL PARK...
IS WE ON YET?
ONE MORE MOMENT, MR. WILKINS. LOOK INTO THE CAMERA...
OKAY, ROLL 'EM.
THIS IS *SHEENA ROGERS*, CHANNEL 8 ON-THE-SPOT NEWS, WITH A LIVE REPORT FROM CENTRAL PARK. MINUTES AGO, *SPIDER-MAN*, ALONG WITH MEMBERS OF THE *AVENGERS*, AND MOST OF THE REST OF THE MISSING SUPER HEROES, EMERGED FROM A STRANGE ALIEN STRUCTURE WHICH TEMPORARILY APPEARED IN THE AREA BEHIND ME.
MR. *AINSLEY WILKINS*, HERE, WITNESSED IT ALL...
YEAH, I SEEN IT. IT WAS LUNCH TIME, SO I COME ON DOWN TO THE PARK--ME AN' CHARLIE PLAY CARDS MOST EVERY DAY--AND I KNOWED CHARLIE'D BE LATE. HE'S ALWAYS LATE.
SO I WANDERED ON DOWN TO TAKE A LOOK SEE AT THE SPOT WHERE THIS SPACE THING FIRST SHOWED UP. NEXT THING I KNEW...
"...THE SPACE THING *REAPPEARED!*
"IT WAS GLOWIN' AND HUMMIN' AND SUDDENLY...
HANG ON, DOC CONNERS!
I THINK WE'RE GOING TO MAKE IT THIS TIME!
WE DID IT! WE *REALLY* DID IT!
WE GOT THROUGH!
"THEN HE ASKED ME FOR A SWIG FROM MY THERMOS.
"'COURSE I GAVE HIM A *HARD TIME*. I DON'T LET JUST ANYBODY SWIG OUTTA MY THERMOS...
S-SURE...HELP YOURSELVES!
TAKE A BIG GULP, DOC. YOU'LL FEEL BETTER.
"THAT SPIDER FELLA TRIED TO *SPOOK* ME BUT I STOOD MY GROUND...
YA-YA-HOO! WE'RE BACK!! WE'RE BACK!!


... AND THEN HE TOOK OFF AND THEM AVENGER-PEOPLE SHOWED UP--
I'M SORRY, MR. WILKINS, BUT WE'RE OUT OF TIME. BACK TO YOU IN THE STUDIO, ROGER...
WHAT IS IT, SPIDER-MAN? WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR UP THERE?
MY CLOTHES!
I HID MY CIVIES IN ONE OF THESE TREES... JUST MINUTES BEFORE I GOT WHISKED AWAY TO THAT OTHER GALAXY.
MY NEW JACKET AND SHOES MUST HAVE FALLEN TO THE GROUND WHEN MY WEB-BALL EVAPORATED! THEY'RE GONE--AND SOME BIRD CONVERTED THE REST OF MY CLOTHES INTO THE SUPER-STRUCTURE FOR HIS NEW NEST!
UGGG
WHAT A MESS! I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO WEAR THEM AGAIN!
WELL, AT LEAST MY WALLET AND KEYS WERE STILL THERE. THAT MEANS NOT ONLY CAN I GET BACK INTO MY APARTMENT, BUT I CAN PAY ALL THE BILLS THAT ARE PROBABLY STUFFED UNDER THE DOOR!
NOT TO WORRY, SPIDER-MAN. I REALLY DON'T THINK ANYONE WOULD BELIEVE ME ANYWAY. *
BUT FIRST I'VE GOT TO GET YOU HOME BEFORE SOME OVER-ANXIOUS SHUTTERBUG SNAPS YOUR PICTURE. REMEMBER... WE CAN'T TELL ANYONE WHAT'S HAPPENED TO US!
* FOR A FULLER ACCOUNT OF SPIDER AND THE DOC'S RETURN, SEE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #252. AND TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT WHERE THEY'VE BEEN, DON'T MISS AN ISSUE OF MARVEL SUPER HEROES SECRET WARS -- DANNY.
THE NEXT DAY...
♪ OH... I'M LOOKING OVER... MY DEAD DOG ROVER... ♫
DAILY BUGLE
♪ ...IT'S KNOWING THAT YOUR DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN AND YOUR FURNITURE IS GONE... ♫
CONCRETE! SMOG! JAMESON! I LOVE IT!
I NEVER THOUGHT I'D APPRECIATE MY LITTLE CORNER OF THE WORLD-- BE IT EVER SO CRUMMY.
♪ YOU... LIGHT UP MY WIFE... ♫
BEN URICH! WHAT'S SHAKIN', PAUDNUH?

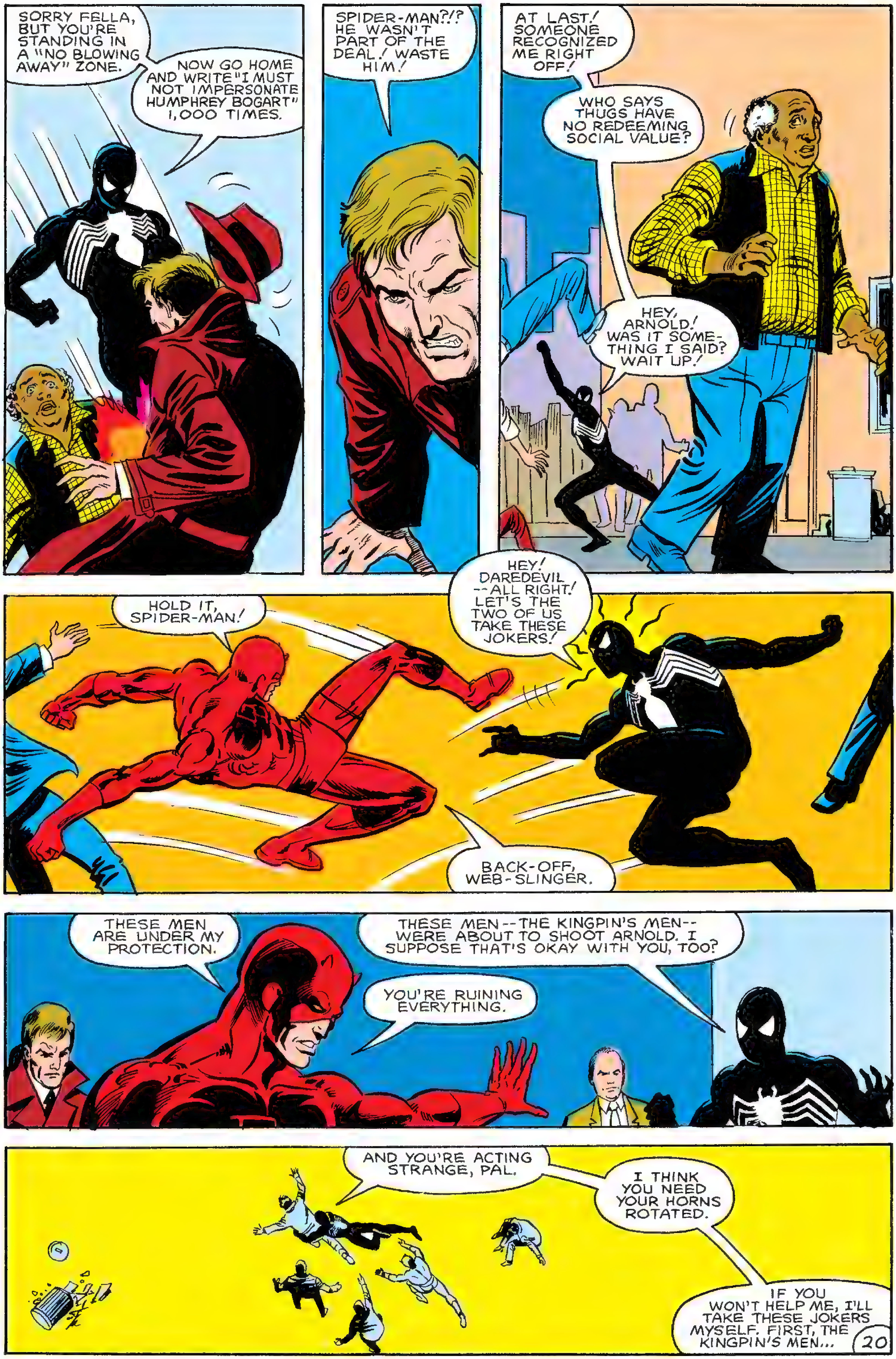

LIFE IS GREAT, AIN'T IT?
WELL! IF IT ISN'T PETER PARKER, THE DAILY BUGLE'S ACE PHOTOG AND GOD'S GIFT TO THE NIKKON. WHERE'VE YOU BEEN?
ON A PLANET IN A FAR DISTANT GALAXY FIGHTING FOR THE SALVATION OF THE UNIVERSE.
UH-HUH.
WELL, JOIN ME IN A CUP OF JAVA. I NEED A DISTRACTION FROM THE BAYONNE MUD-WRESTLERS.
YOU REMEMBER THE SANTIAGO KID--THE ONE UP ON A MURDER ONE RAP?
YEAH, I SHOT SOME PIX OF HIM. DIDN'T SPIDER-MAN FIND THE REAL KILLER AND GET SANTIAGO OFF?
NOPE. TURNS OUT THE OTHER GUY WAS CLEAN. IT'S BACK TO SQUARE ONE WITH THE SANTIAGO KID. WHAT NAGS ME IS I'M SURE HE DIDN'T...
...PETE...?
I REALLY, REALLY HATE THAT.
DUMB. DUMB. DUMB.
I THOUGHT THIS MESS WAS ALL CLEARED UP BEFORE I WAS "ZAPPED" INTO NEVER-NEVER LAND.* THEY'RE STILL GOING TO LOCK UP AN INNOCENT KID.
*LAST ISH--DANNY.
WELL, I CAN'T LET THAT HAPPEN.
I'M HIDDEN IN THIS CORNER OF THE ROOF. NOW, LET'S SEE IF I REMEMBER HOW TO DO THIS...
IF I JUST CONCENTRATE HARD ENOUGH...
YEAH, MY STREET CLOTHES TAKE ON THEIR OWN SECRET IDENTITY. NOW SAY HELLO TO THE ALL-NEW, ALL-DIFFERENT...
SPIDER-MAN!
HOO-BOY. AM I IMPRESSED.

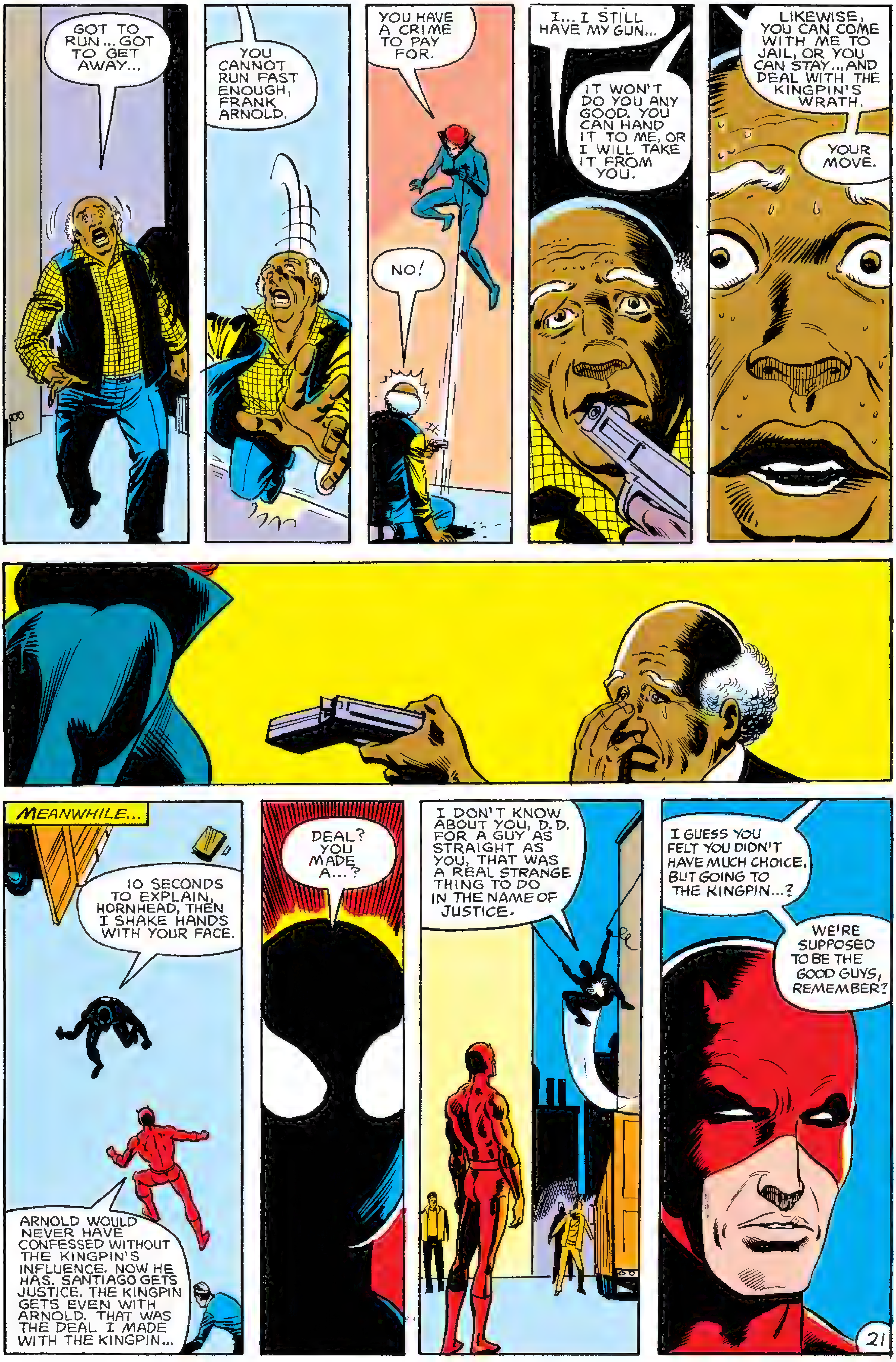

THIS SUIT IS GREAT.
I MEAN, THE STYLING WON'T KEEP BILL BLASS UP AT NIGHT, BUT IT'S REEAALLLL FUNCTIONAL!
IMAGINE... NO MORE LEAVING MY STREET CLOTHES BALLED UP IN AN ALLEY SOMEWHERE.
IT FITS BETTER AND IS MORE DURABLE THEN MY OLD THREADS...
...AND THE NEW WEB-SHOOTERS ARE SIMPLY TOUGH.
HOT DANG! THIS IS IT... THE BIG TIME!
MAYBE, AFTER I WRAP UP THIS MESS WITH THAT SANTIAGO KID, I SHOULD ROLL UP THE REST OF MY OLD SPIDEY OUTFITS...
...AND DRIBBLE THEM INTO THE NEAREST GOODWILL DEPOSIT BOX.
THAT WAY, UNDERPRIVILEGED KIDS WORLDWIDE CAN SLIP INTO ONE OF MY OLD OUTFITS, AND BE INSTANTLY PERSECUTED BY OLD PUBLISHERS WITH CREW CUTS.
AND IN THIS CASE, MAYBE OL' JAMESON WOULD BE JUSTIFIED. IF I'D BEEN MORE ALERT...
...ZELNICK MIGHT NOT BE DEAD TO BEGIN WITH.
MEANWHILE, AT THE LAW OFFICES OF NELSON AND MURDOCK...
SO, MR. WAGNER GOT HIMSELF A NEW LAWYER, HUH?
I'M SORRY, FOGGY BUT MR. WAGNER SAID HE COULDN'T WAIT ANY LONGER, AND MATT'S DISAPPEARED AGAIN, WORKING ON THE SANTIAGO CASE. NOBODY CAN FIND HIM.
C'MON, BECKY HOW MANY GUYS DOES IT TAKE TO FIND ONE BLIND MAN?
LEMME GUESS-- FIVE!
ONE TO LEAD HIM AWAY, AND FOUR TO CONFUSE HIS DOG!
...WHO ARE YOU?
C'MON... YOU MUST HAVE SEEN ME BEFORE!
ACE CRIME FIGHTER!
IDOL OF MILLIONS!
WELL... MAYBE THOUSANDS...
NAME STARTS WITH AN "S"...


LISTEN, MISTER, WE DON'T WANT ANY TROUBLE...
C'MON, NELSON, DON'T PLAY DUMB! WHO ELSE CAN STICK TO WALLS LIKE THIS?
UH... THE BLACK WIDOW... THE FLY... THE BEETLE...
ARRRGH.
FOGGY... I THINK IT'S SPIDER-MAN...
...IN A SILLY OUTFIT...
GIVE THE LADY A BISCUIT.
I'M HERE TO SEE YOUR BOSS, BUT I TAKE IT HE'S DONE A FADE-OUT ON YOU.
MY... PARTNER... IS BUSY WITH A CASE...
YES... THE SANTIAGO MURDER THING. I WAS IN ON THAT. I WAS HOPING WE COULD COMPARE NOTES.
BUT SINCE MURDOCK'S NOT HERE, I'LL JUST HAVE TO HANDLE IT ON MY OWN.
IF YOU FIND MATT ALONG THE WAY, REMIND HIM THAT HE'S GOT ONE OR TWO PAYING CLIENTS, TOO. Y'KNOW... E.T. PHONE HOME.
GREAT. NO MURDOCK. NO CHANCE TO GET A QUICKIE BRIEFING ON WHAT WENT WRONG WITH HIS CASE.
I NEED A CLUE... A HINT. ANYTHING AT ALL TO GIVE ME SOME DIRECTION TO GO IN.
GUESS I'LL CHECK OUT THAT GOON'S HIDEOUT. SEE IF ANYONE WANTS TO CHIT-CHAT.
HMMMPH. SHE CALLED MY NEW OUTFIT "SILLY-LOOKING". SISTER, THAT HAIR-DOO OF YOURS GAVE ME A REAL CHARGE, TOO.

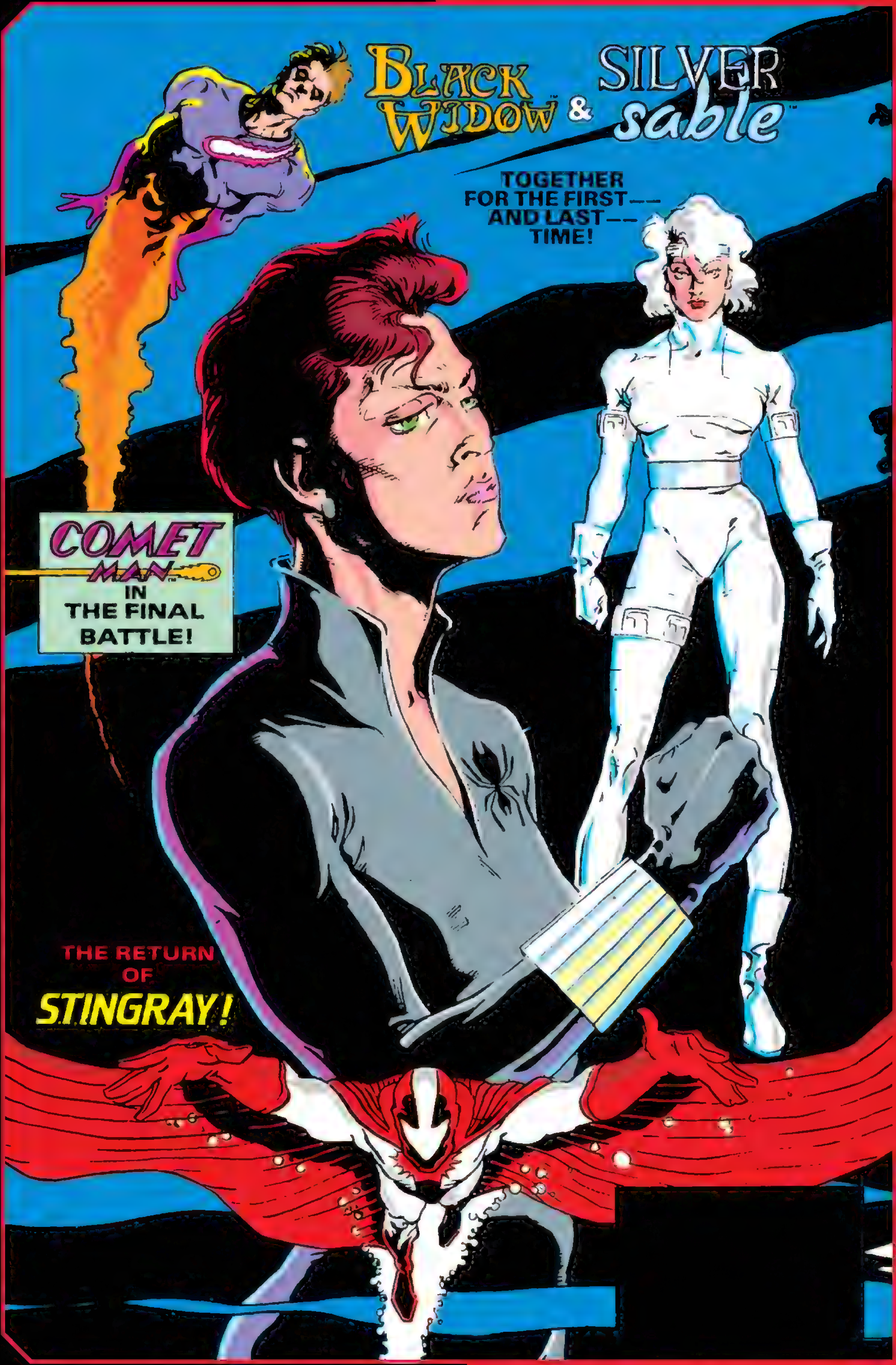

MEANWHILE...
NATASHA...HOW CAN YOU BE SURE THIS ARNOLD GUY KNOWS SOMETHING?
MAGIC.
COME AGAIN?
I DIDN'T SURVIVE AS A SPY ALL THESE YEARS BY *NOT* BEING ABLE TO READ PEOPLE. THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT A MAN WHO SQUIRMS LIKE THAT...
DAREDEVIL! DOWN HERE!
WHO IS THAT MAN?
HE'S CALLED THE ARRANGER. HE'S ONE OF THE KINGPIN'S MEN.
MR. FISK WISHES ME TO PRESENT YOU WITH A PROPOSITION.
YOU MAKE DEALS WITH THE KINGPIN...?
NATASHA, NOT NOW.
OKAY, ARRANGER. TALK TO ME.
ACROSS TOWN...
VEDDY EENTERESTINK.
NOW, I'VE SEEN CLUES BEFORE.
THIS DEFINITELY FEELS LIKE A CLUE.
U CARRY
THE GANG'S LOADING A LOT OF STUFF FROM THEIR HEADQUARTERS TO TAKE IT SOMEWHERE.
U CARRY
WHAT'S INTERESTING IS THE STUFF THEY'RE PACKING LOOKS AN AWFUL LOT LIKE THE GOODS THAT WERE STOLEN FROM ZELNICK'S PAWN SHOP DURING THAT RIOT.
OF COURSE, I COULD BE WRONG. AND CARY COLEMAN COULD BE A KKK HIGH DRUID!

SOON, A VAN STOPS IN THE ALLEY BEHIND A CERTAIN PAWN SHOP...
OKAY...I MADE A MISTAKE.
I THOUGHT HAVING YOU BOYS STOCK THE SHELVES IN BROAD DAYLIGHT WOULD THROW OFF SUSPICION WHILE YOU FILTERED IN THE STOLEN STUFF.
NO GOOD, MAN. WE HAD DAREDEVIL BREAK UP OUR CRIB TODAY. WE DON'T WANT NO MORE HASSLES WITH THAT GUY.
WE WANT OUT. WE'RE HANGING UP OUR COLORS.
PAY UP, MR. ARNOLD. WE'RE OUT.
EXCUSE ME, MR. ARNOLD...
UH-OH, COMPANY.
MY SPIDER-SENSE READS IT AS *BAD* COMPANY!
JACK ZELNICK WAS ONE OF THE KINGPIN'S KEY MEN IN THIS AREA. HE'S FOUND OUT YOU'RE THE GUY WHO POPPED HIM.
MR. ARNOLD...
M-ME...? K-KILL ZELNICK?!? YOU... YOU GOT NO EVIDENCE...
THE KINGPIN...
...HE DON'T NEED NO EVIDENCE.
ZELNICK WAS OUR KEY FENCE DOWN HERE. HE MOVED A LOTTA MERCHANDISE FOR A LOTTA PEOPLE.
I BOUGHT A LAMP FOR MY MA FROM HIM ONCE.
YOU WANTED IN. TRIED TO BUY IN A COUPLA TIMES. THE KINGPIN'S GOT RECORDS.
ZELNICK WOULDN'T SELL, SO YOU OFFED HIM.
N-NO...
OKAY...OKAY I ADMIT IT... I KILLED HIM. HE WOULDN'T SELL. WE... WE WOULD'VE BEEN PARTNERS... I NEVER WANTED HIM TO DIE...
THE NIGHT OF THE RIOT, I WAS DRINKING ... I DON'T KNOW WHERE I GOT THE GUN...
PLEASE...PLEASE DON'T KILL ME. I'LL DO ANYTHING...
GLAD YOU SAID THAT...


SORRY FELLA, BUT YOU'RE STANDING IN A "NO BLOWING AWAY" ZONE.
NOW GO HOME AND WRITE "I MUST NOT IMPERSONATE HUMPHREY BOGART" 1,000 TIMES.
SPIDER-MAN?!? HE WASN'T PART OF THE DEAL! WASTE HIM!
AT LAST! SOMEONE RECOGNIZED ME RIGHT OFF!
WHO SAYS THUGS HAVE NO REDEEMING SOCIAL VALUE?
HEY, ARNOLD! WAS IT SOMETHING I SAID? WAIT UP!
HOLD IT, SPIDER-MAN!
HEY! DAREDEVIL --ALL RIGHT! LET'S THE TWO OF US TAKE THESE JOKERS!
BACK-OFF, WEB-SLINGER.
THESE MEN ARE UNDER MY PROTECTION.
THESE MEN--THE KINGPIN'S MEN--WERE ABOUT TO SHOOT ARNOLD. I SUPPOSE THAT'S OKAY WITH YOU, TOO?
YOU'RE RUINING EVERYTHING.
AND YOU'RE ACTING STRANGE, PAL.
I THINK YOU NEED YOUR HORNS ROTATED.
IF YOU WON'T HELP ME, I'LL TAKE THESE JOKERS MYSELF. FIRST, THE KINGPIN'S MEN...

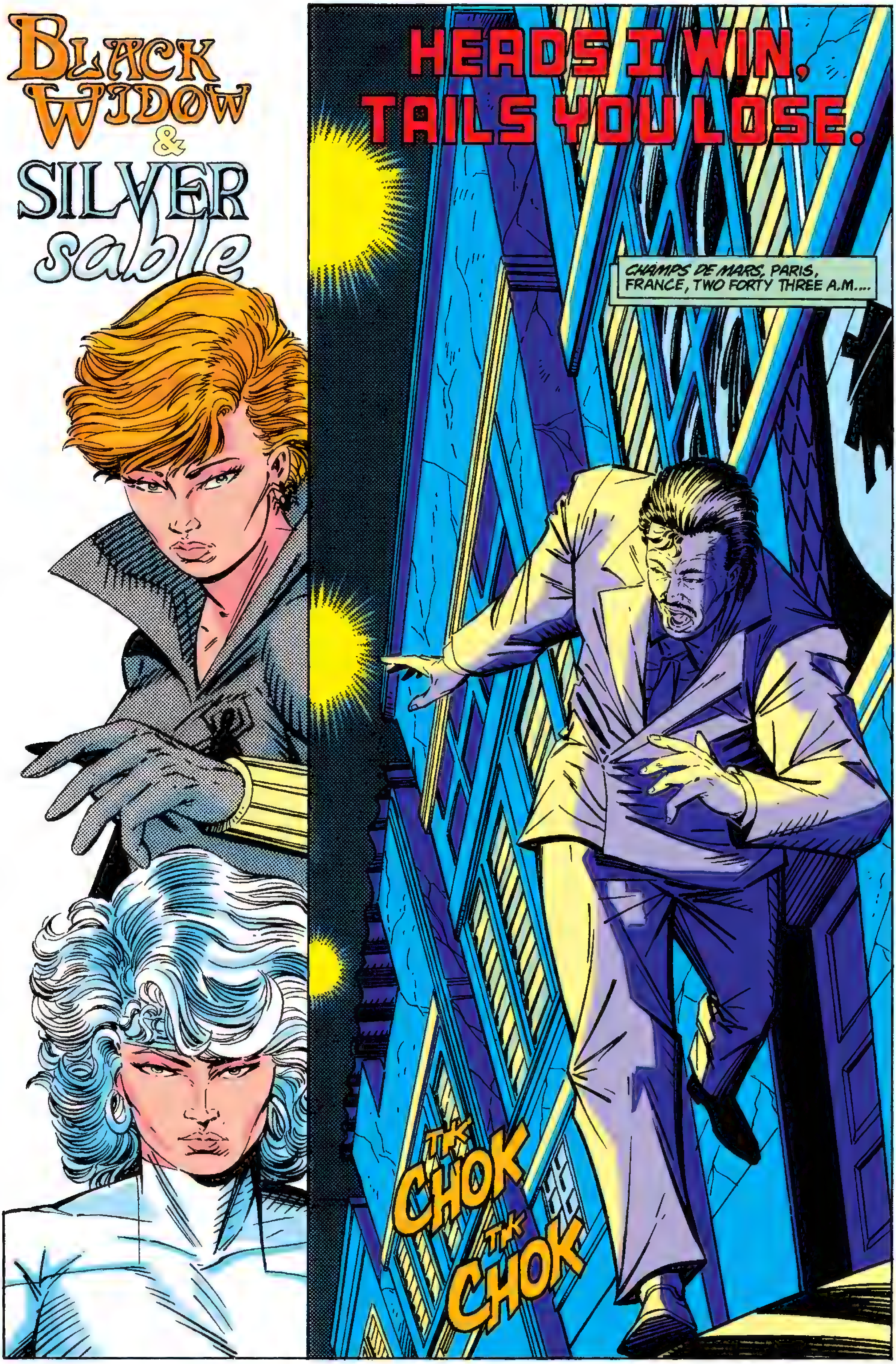

GOT TO RUN... GOT TO GET AWAY...
YOU CANNOT RUN FAST ENOUGH, FRANK ARNOLD.
YOU HAVE A CRIME TO PAY FOR.
NO!
I... I STILL HAVE MY GUN...
IT WON'T DO YOU ANY GOOD. YOU CAN HAND IT TO ME, OR I WILL TAKE IT FROM YOU.
LIKEWISE, YOU CAN COME WITH ME TO JAIL, OR YOU CAN STAY... AND DEAL WITH THE KINGPIN'S WRATH.
YOUR MOVE.
MEANWHILE...
10 SECONDS TO EXPLAIN, HORNHEAD, THEN I SHAKE HANDS WITH YOUR FACE.
ARNOLD WOULD NEVER HAVE CONFESSED WITHOUT THE KINGPIN'S INFLUENCE. NOW HE HAS. SANTIAGO GETS JUSTICE. THE KINGPIN GETS EVEN WITH ARNOLD. THAT WAS THE DEAL I MADE WITH THE KINGPIN...
DEAL? YOU MADE A...?
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, D.D. FOR A GUY AS STRAIGHT AS YOU, THAT WAS A REAL STRANGE THING TO DO IN THE NAME OF JUSTICE.
I GUESS YOU FELT YOU DIDN'T HAVE MUCH CHOICE, BUT GOING TO THE KINGPIN...?
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE THE GOOD GUYS, REMEMBER?

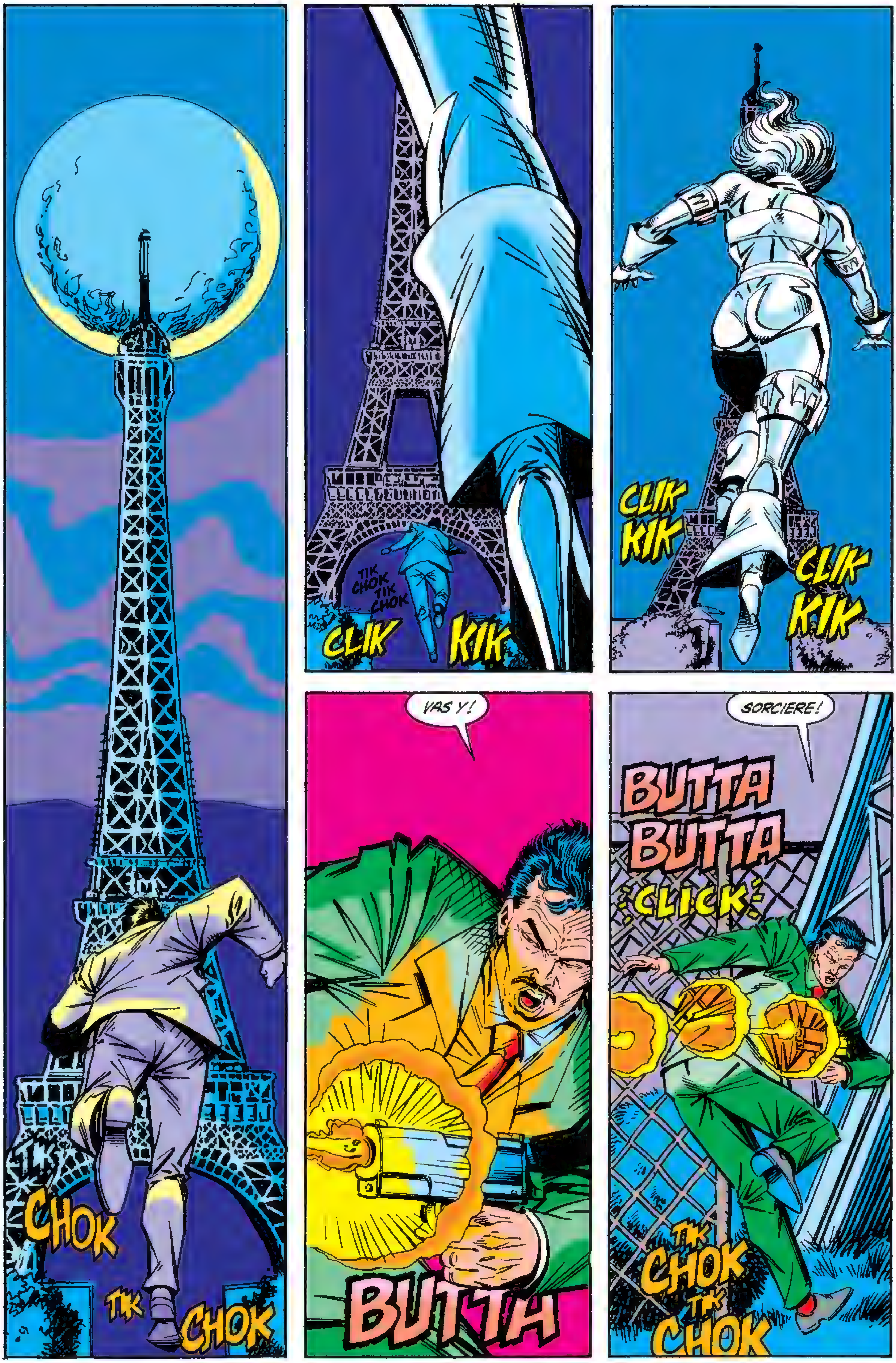
MORNING.
CASE DISMISSED.
HEY! HEY, MAN! YOU DID IT! YOU GOT ME OFF!
IN COURT, JUAN...
...BUT ON THE STREET, YOU'RE STILL ON YOUR OWN. YOUR EX-GANG WILL STILL BE AFTER YOUR TAIL.
YOU'D PROBABLY BE SAFER IN JAIL.
HEY MAN, YOU'RE MY LAWYER. YOU'VE GOT TO HELP ME! YOU'VE GOT TO!
SORRY, JUAN. I'M A LAWYER... NOT A BODY-GUARD.
OUTSIDE.
PROUD OF YOURSELF?
NO. I MADE SOME UNPLEASANT COMPROMISES TO SEE SOME IMPERFECT JUSTICE DONE. I DON'T FEEL VERY GOOD ABOUT IT.
EVERYTHING WORKED OUT. DOESN'T THAT MAKE IT ALL RIGHT? WHY THE SUDDEN RUSH OF MORALITY?
SOMETHING SPIDER-MAN SAID TO ME LAST NIGHT...
...SOMETHING ABOUT JUSTICE. I'VE GOT A LOT OF THINKING TO DO.
WELL, ALL'S WELL THAT...
I HATE CLICHES.
BUT I DO LOVE IT WHEN THINGS FALL INTO PLACE. ARNOLD GOES TO JAIL... THE KID GETS SPRUNG...
...THE SUN IS SHINING AND THE BIRDS ARE SINGING...
MAYBE I WAS A LITTLE HARD ON DAREDEVIL. WE'RE BOTH ON THE SAME SIDE. BUT... GEE...
...I WONDER WHY HE NEVER SAID ANYTHING ABOUT MY NEW SUIT...?
NEXT: SPIDER-MAN AND CAPTAIN MARVEL!

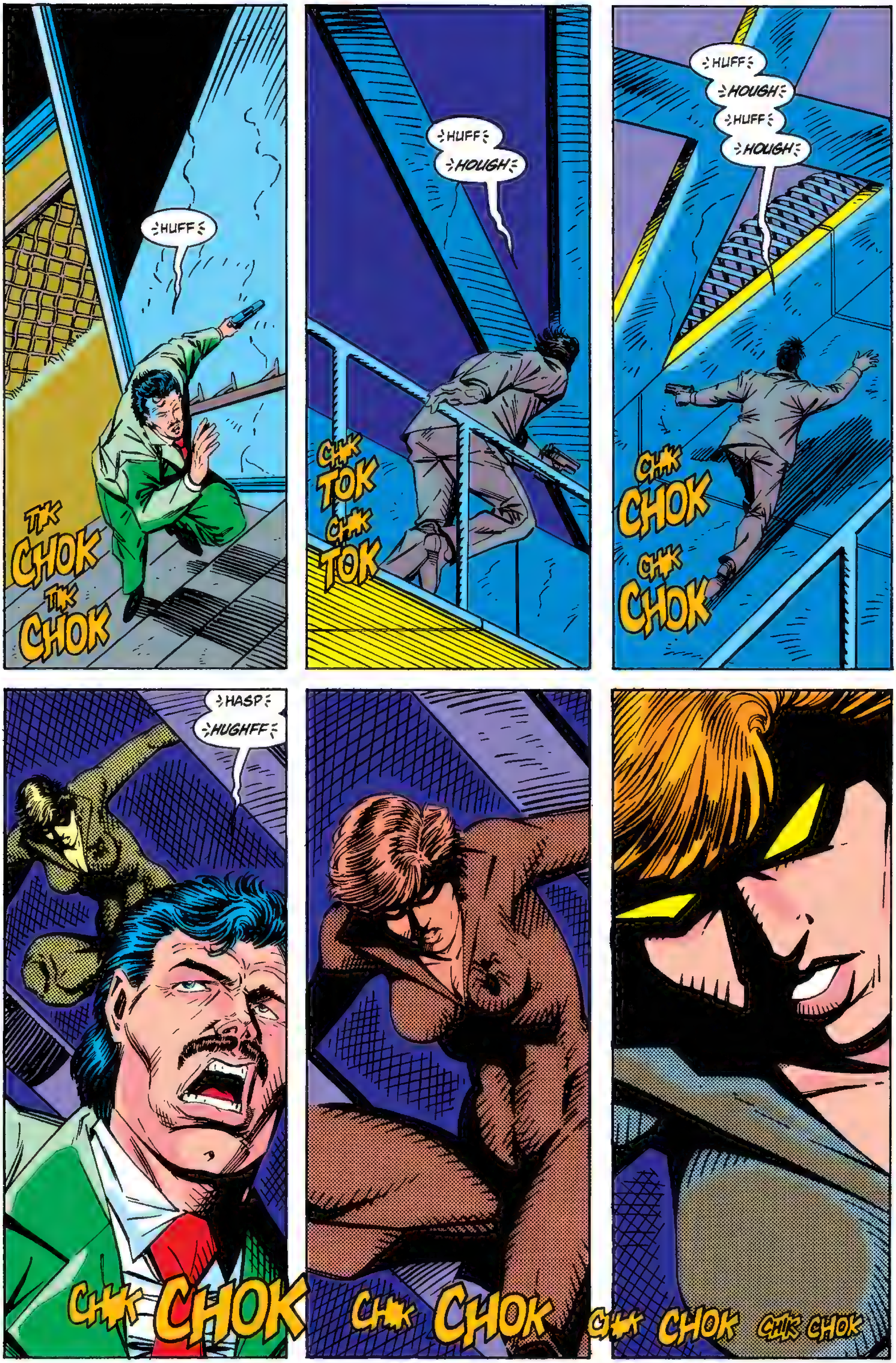

BLACK WIDOW & SILVER sable
TOGETHER FOR THE FIRST— —AND LAST— —TIME!
COMET MAN IN THE FINAL BATTLE!
THE RETURN OF STINGRAY!

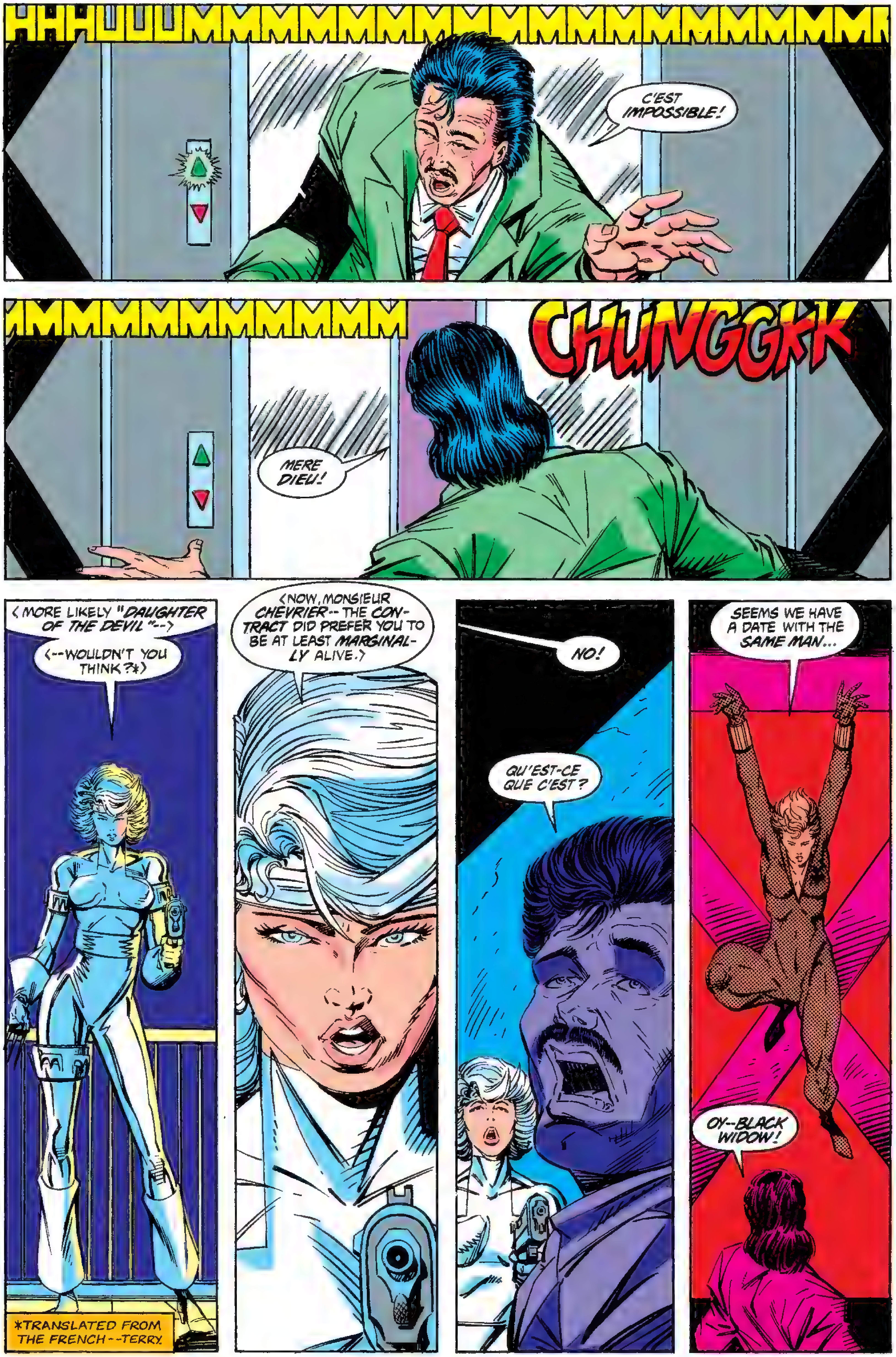
WRITER: FABIAN NICIEZA · PENCILER: ROB LIEFELD · INKER: BOB WIACEK
COLORIST: KELLY CORVESE · LETTERER: MICHAEL HEISLER
ASSISTANT EDITOR: KELLY CORVESE · EDITOR: TERRY KAVANAGH

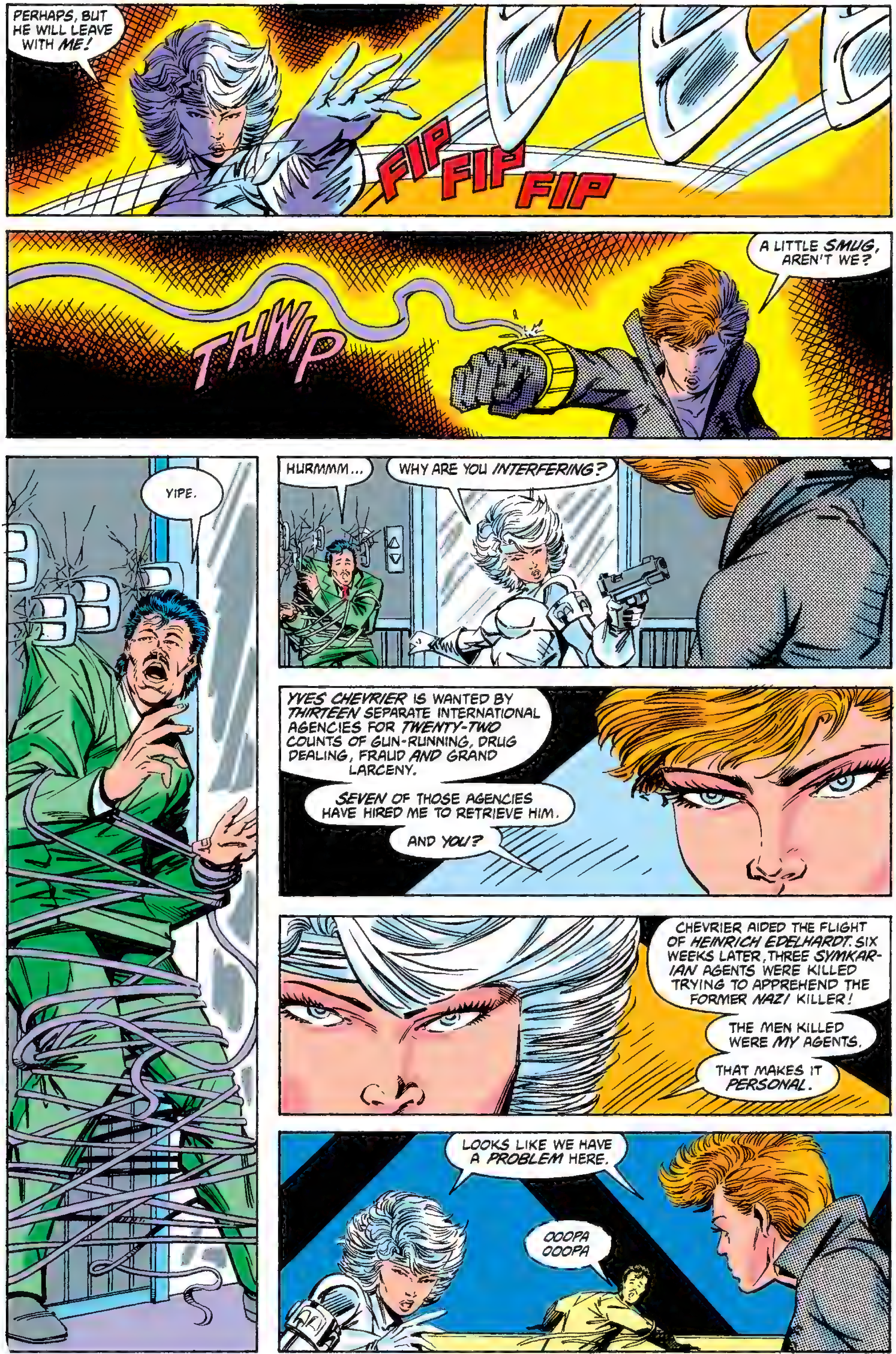
MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #53

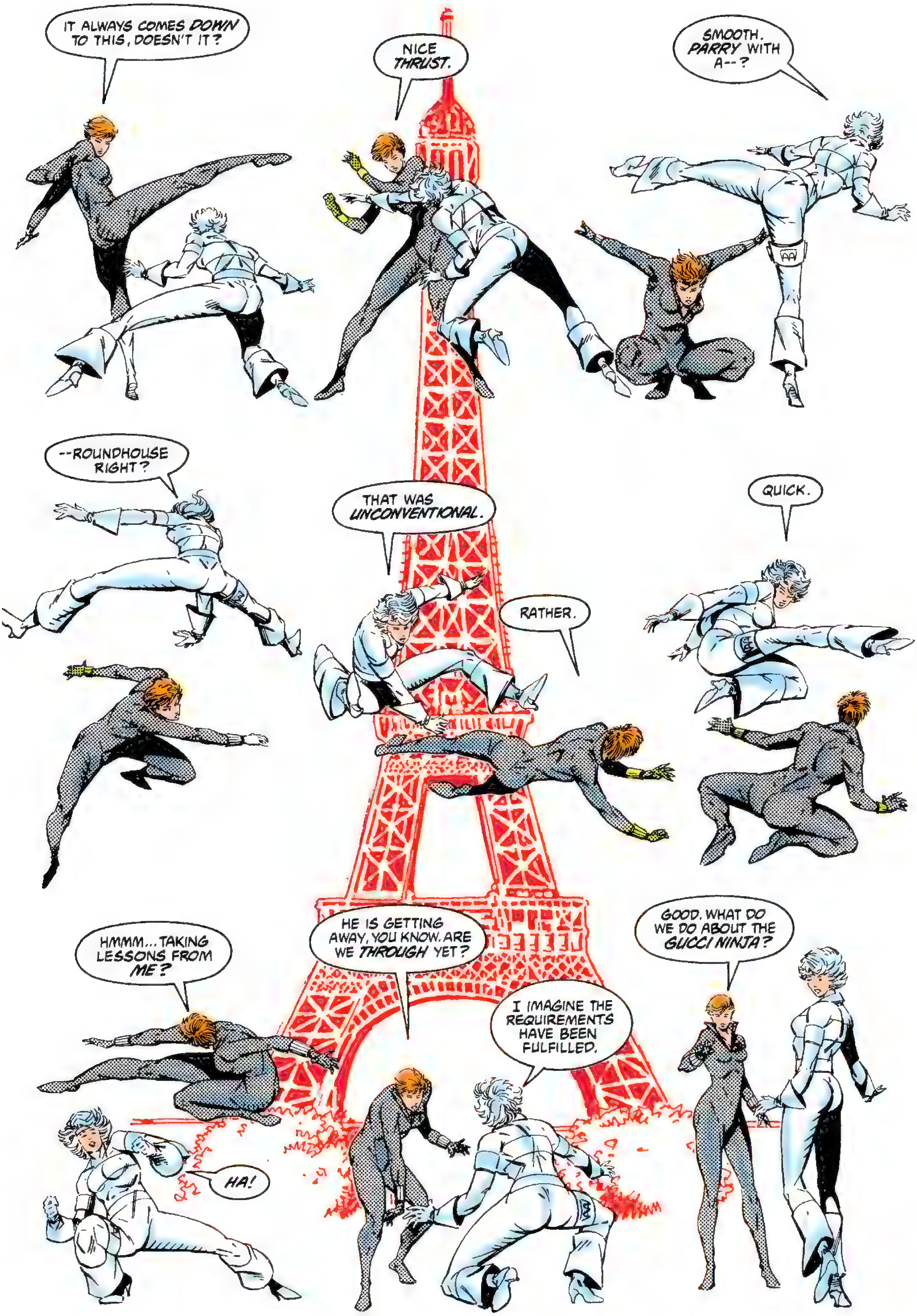

BLACK WIDOW
&
SILVER
sable
HEADS I WIN, TAILS YOU LOSE.
CHAMPS DE MARS, PARIS, FRANCE, TWO FORTY THREE A.M....
TK CHOK
TK CHOK

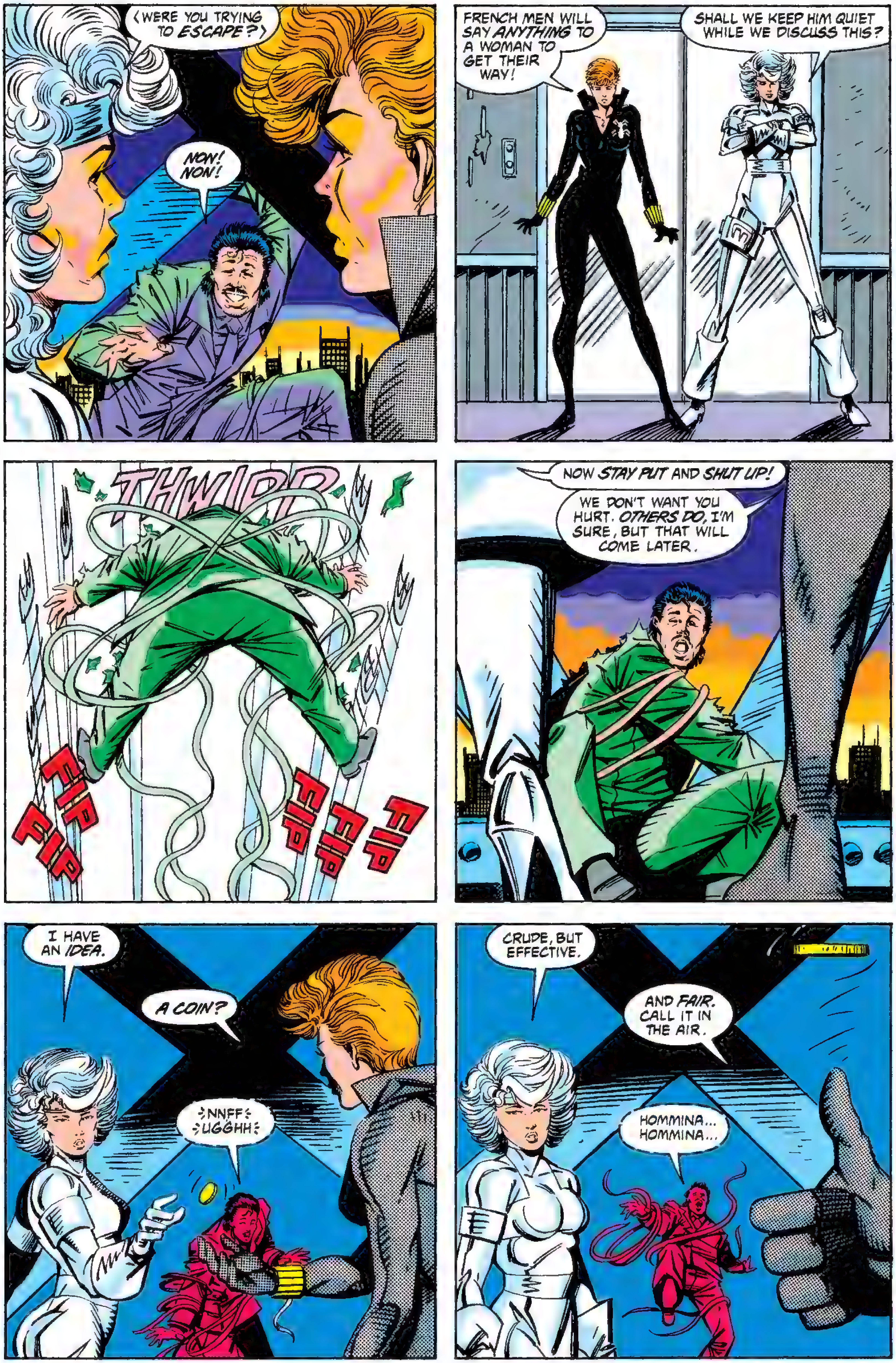

TIK
CHOK
TIK
CHOK
TIK CHOK TIK CHOK
CLIK
KIK
CLIK KIK
CLIK KIK
VAS Y!
BUTTA
SORCIERE!
BUTTA BUTTA
CLICK
TIK CHOK TIK CHOK

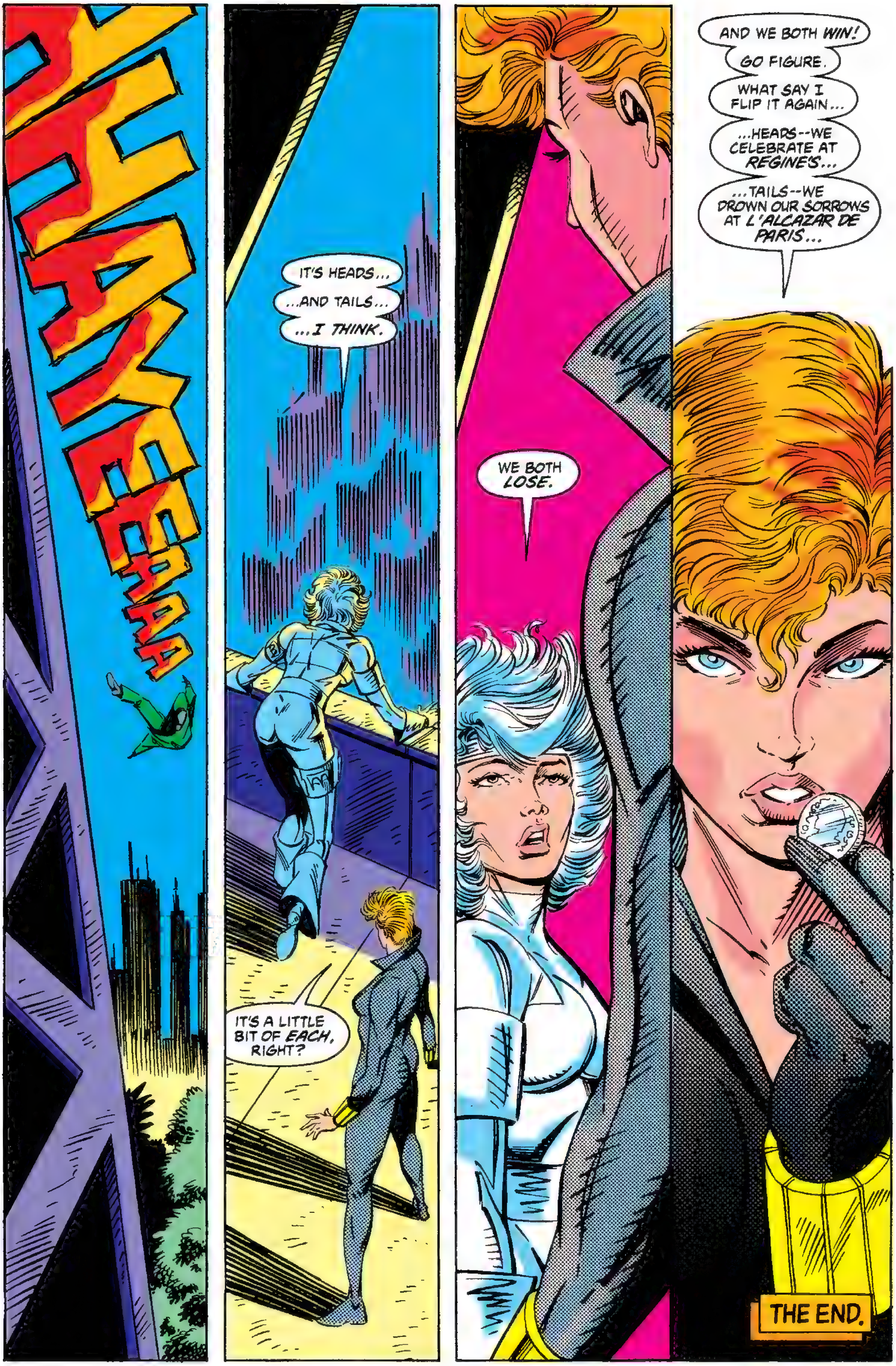

HUFF
TIK CHOK
TIK CHOK
HUFF
HOUGH
CHIK TOK
CHIK TOK
HUFF
HOUGH
HUFF
HOUGH
CHIK CHOK
CHIK CHOK
HASP
HUGHFF
CHIK CHOK
CHIK CHOK
CHIK CHOK
CHIK CHOK

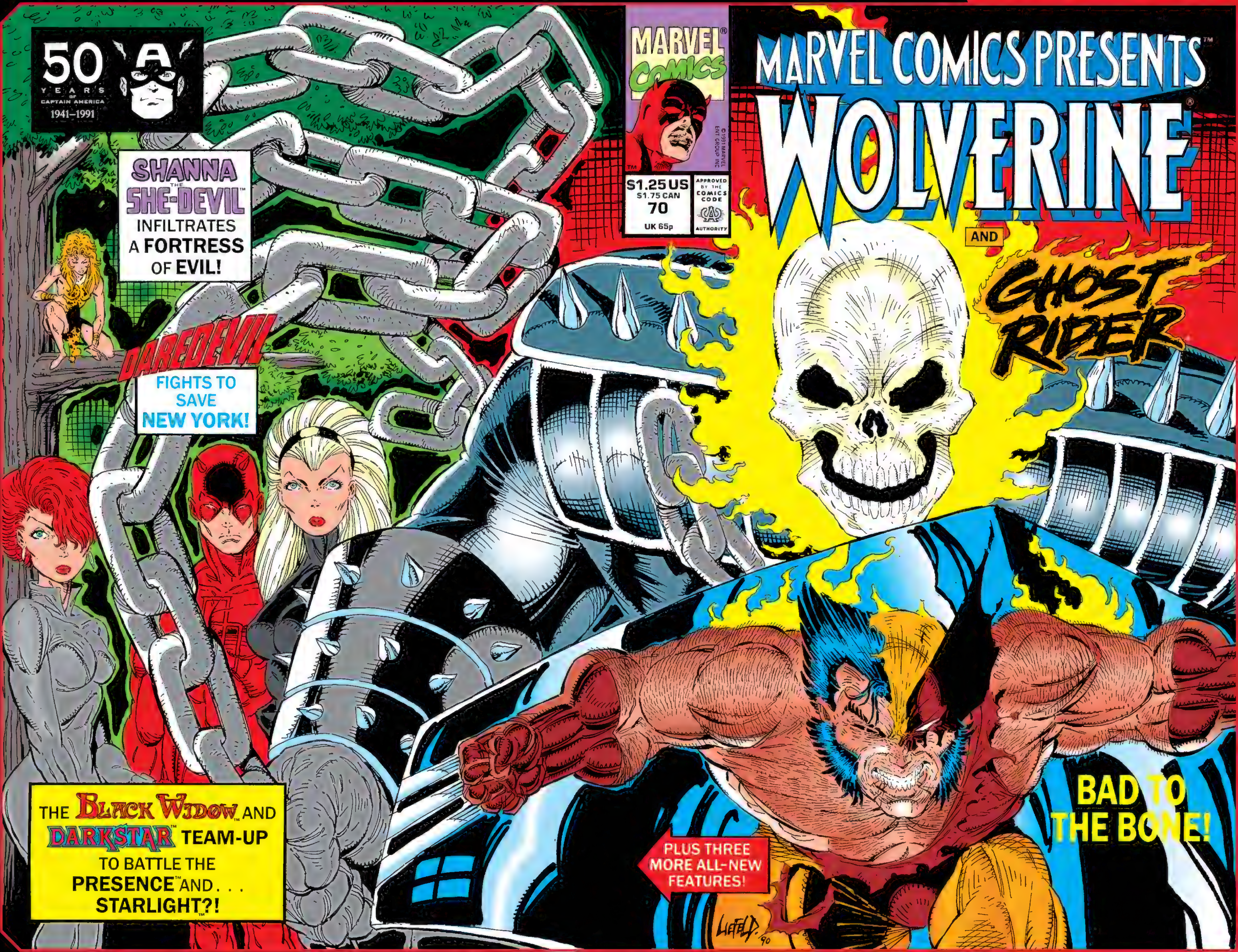

HHHUUUMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM
C'EST IMPOSSIBLE!
MMMMMMMMMMMMMM
CHUNGGRK
MERE DIEU!
‹MORE LIKELY "DAUGHTER OF THE DEVIL"--›
‹--WOULDN'T YOU THINK?*›
*TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH--TERRY.
‹NOW, MONSIEUR CHEVRIER-- THE CONTRACT DID PREFER YOU TO BE AT LEAST MARGINALLY ALIVE.›
NO!
QU'EST-CE QUE C'EST?
SEEMS WE HAVE A DATE WITH THE SAME MAN...
OY--BLACK WIDOW!


PERHAPS, BUT HE WILL LEAVE WITH *ME!*
FIP FIP FIP
A LITTLE *SMUG,* AREN'T WE?
THWIP
YIPE.
HURMMM...
WHY ARE YOU *INTERFERING?*
YVES CHEVRIER IS WANTED BY *THIRTEEN* SEPARATE INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES FOR *TWENTY-TWO* COUNTS OF GUN-RUNNING, DRUG DEALING, FRAUD *AND* GRAND LARCENY.
SEVEN OF THOSE AGENCIES HAVE HIRED ME TO RETRIEVE HIM.
AND *YOU?*
CHEVRIER AIDED THE FLIGHT OF *HEINRICH EDELHARDT.* SIX WEEKS LATER, THREE *SYMKARIAN* AGENTS WERE KILLED TRYING TO APPREHEND THE FORMER *NAZI* KILLER!
THE MEN KILLED WERE *MY* AGENTS.
THAT MAKES IT *PERSONAL.*
LOOKS LIKE WE HAVE A *PROBLEM* HERE.
OOOPA OOOPA


IT ALWAYS COMES *DOWN* TO THIS, DOESN'T IT?
NICE *THRUST.*
SMOOTH. *PARRY* WITH A--?
--ROUNDHOUSE RIGHT?
THAT WAS *UNCONVENTIONAL.*
RATHER.
QUICK.
HMMM... TAKING LESSONS FROM *ME?*
HA!
HE IS GETTING AWAY, YOU KNOW. ARE WE *THROUGH* YET?
I IMAGINE THE REQUIREMENTS HAVE BEEN FULFILLED.
GOOD. WHAT DO WE DO ABOUT THE *GUCCI NINJA?*


‹WERE YOU TRYING TO *ESCAPE?*›
NON! NON!
FRENCH MEN WILL SAY *ANYTHING* TO A WOMAN TO GET THEIR WAY!
SHALL WE KEEP HIM QUIET WHILE WE DISCUSS THIS?
THWIPP
FIP
FIP
FIP
FIP
FIP
NOW *STAY PUT* AND *SHUT UP!*
WE DON'T WANT YOU HURT. *OTHERS DO,* I'M SURE, BUT THAT WILL COME LATER.
I HAVE AN *IDEA.*
A COIN?
:NNFF: :UGGHH:
CRUDE, BUT EFFECTIVE.
AND *FAIR.* CALL IT IN THE AIR.
HOMMINA... HOMMINA...


YHAYEEAAA
IT'S HEADS... ...AND TAILS... ...I THINK.
IT'S A LITTLE BIT OF *EACH*, RIGHT?
WE BOTH *LOSE*.
AND WE BOTH *WIN!*
GO FIGURE.
WHAT SAY I FLIP IT AGAIN...
...HEADS--WE CELEBRATE AT *REGINE'S...*
...TAILS--WE DROWN OUR SORROWS AT *L'ALCAZAR DE PARIS...*
THE END.



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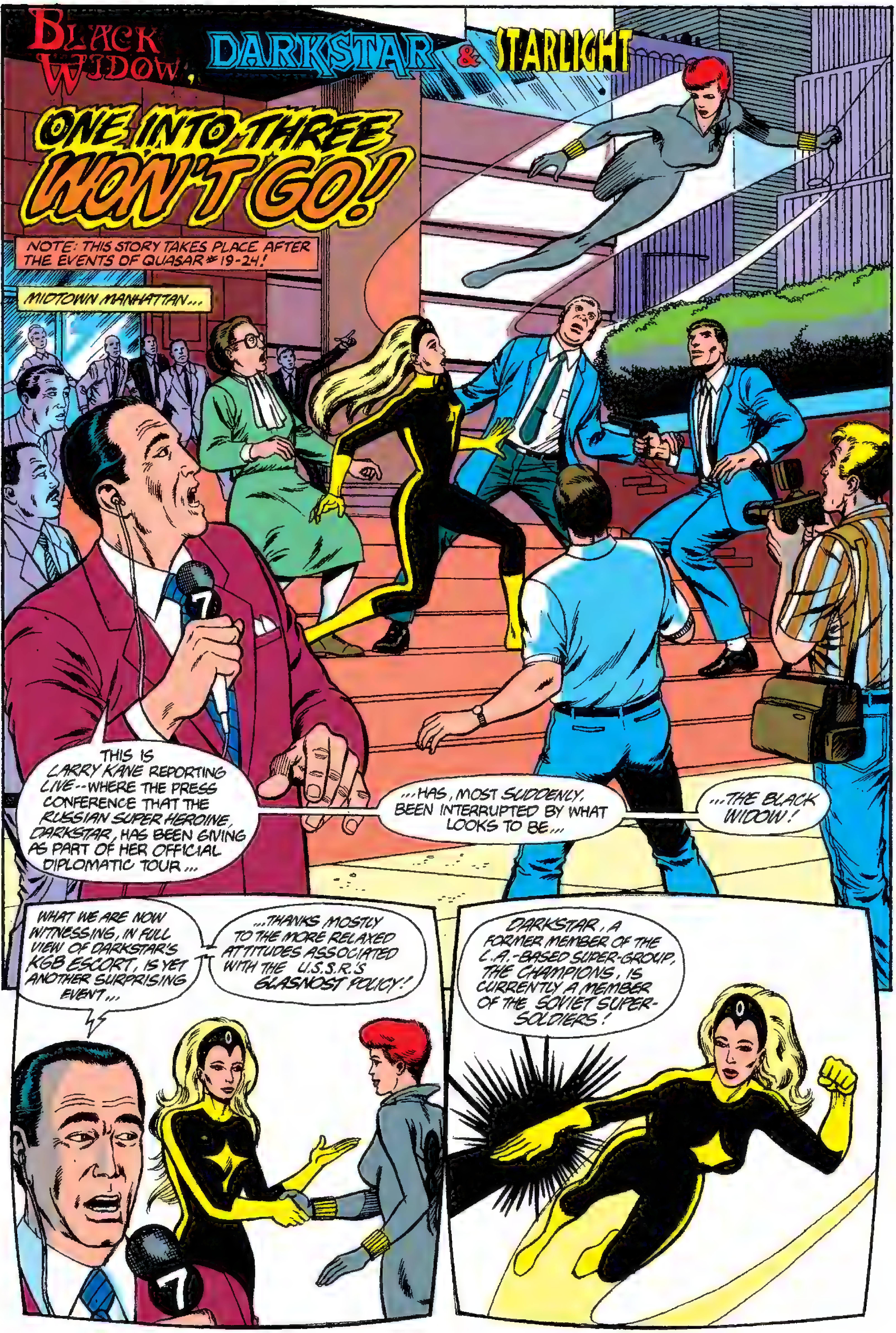
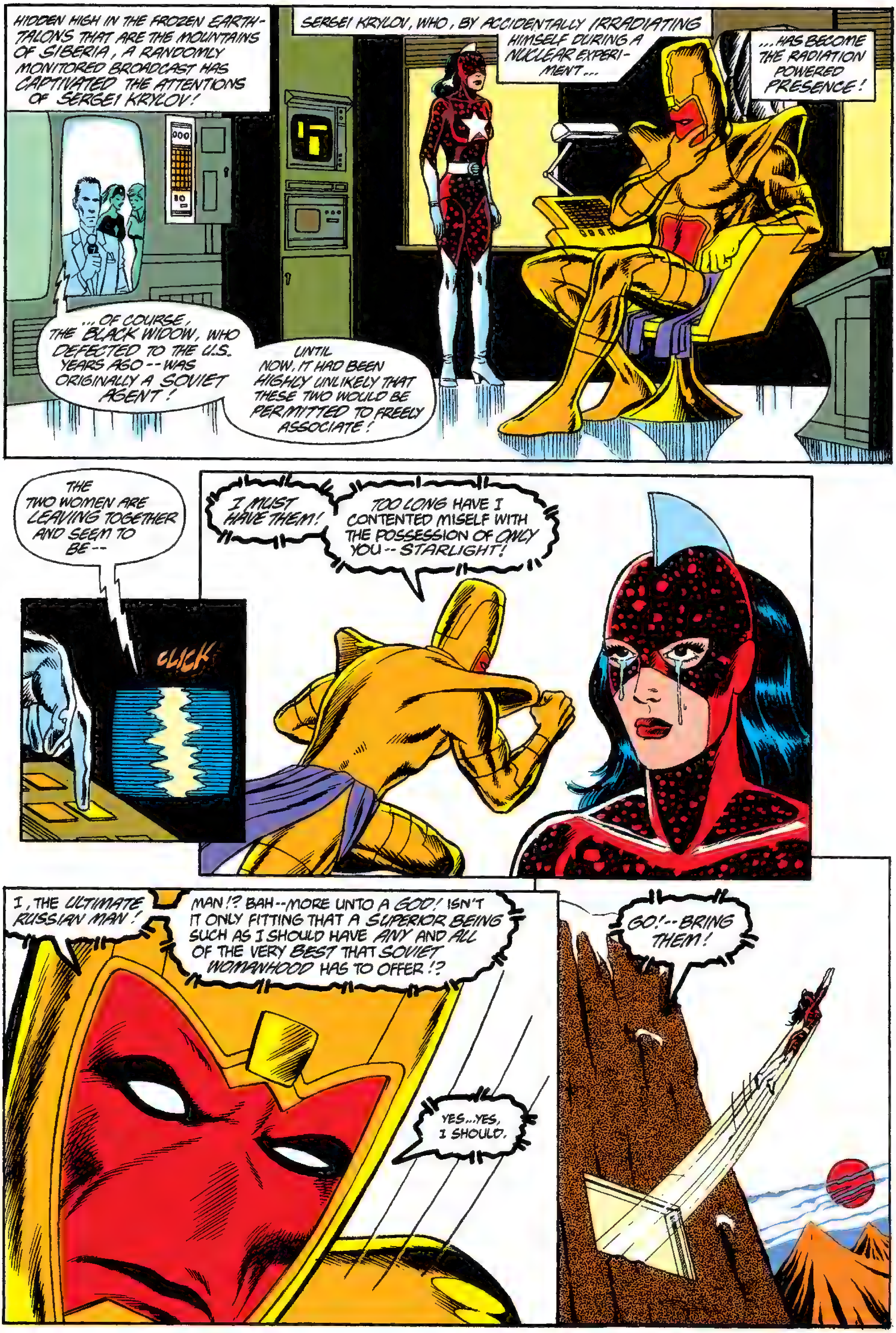
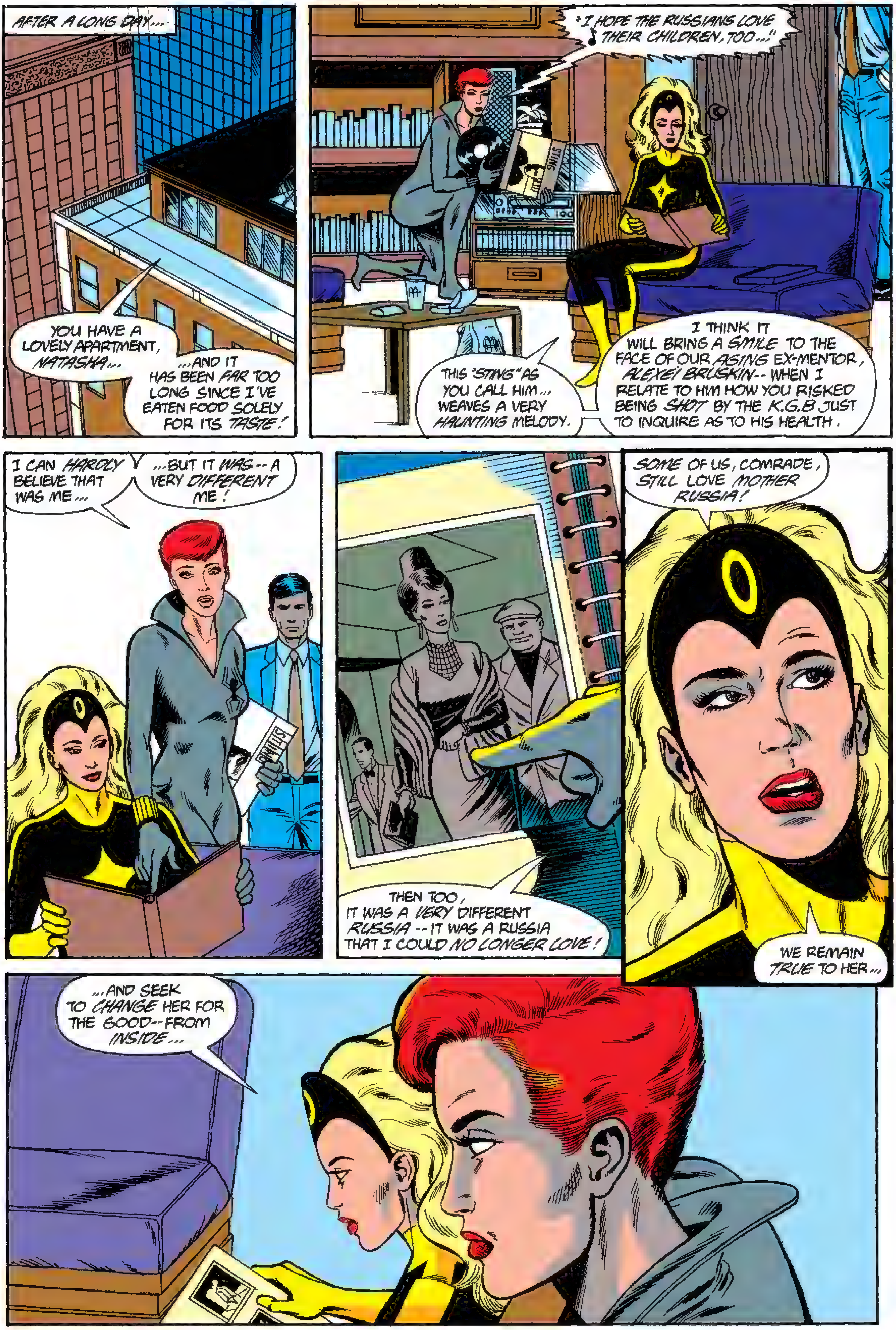
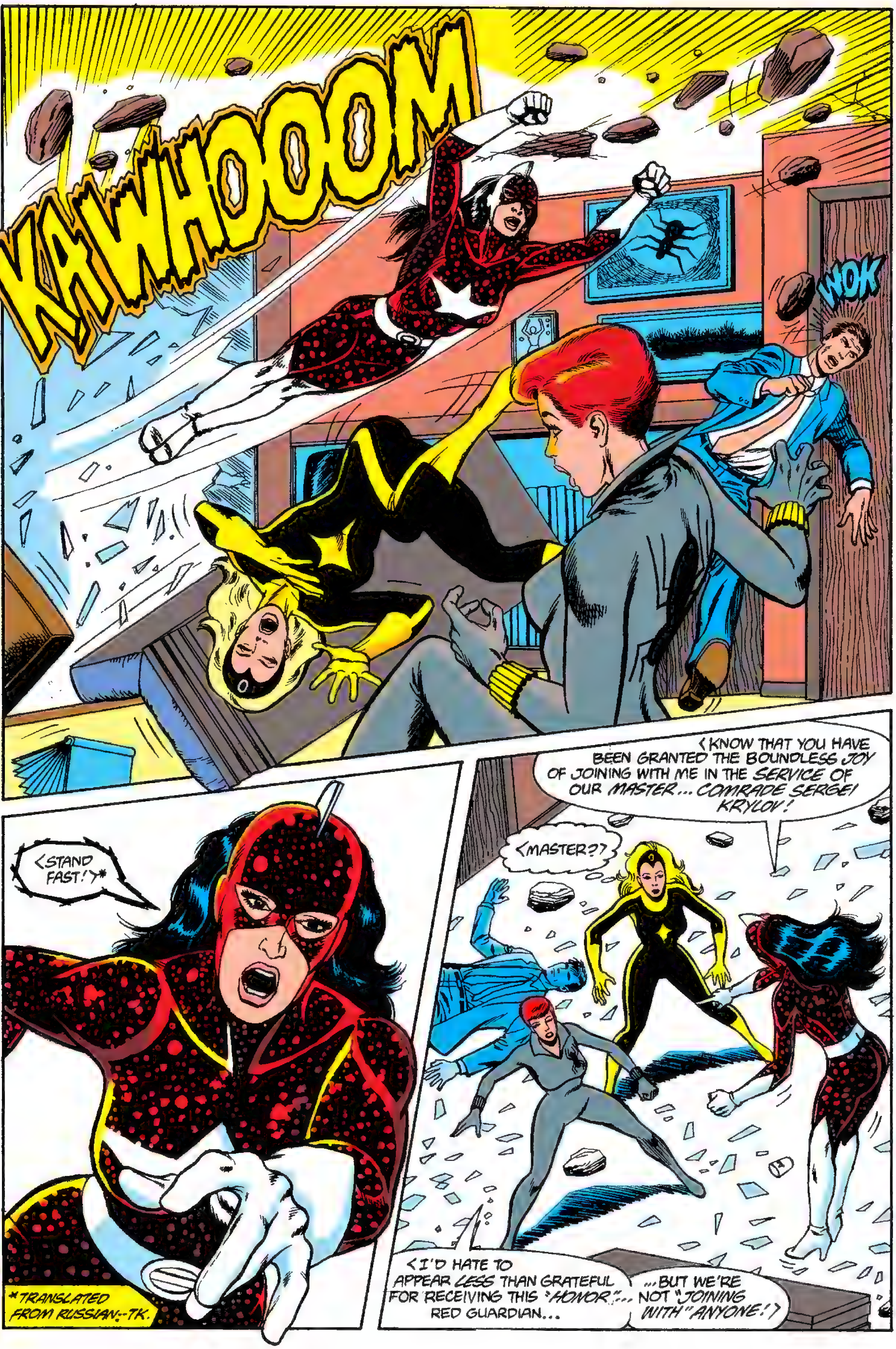
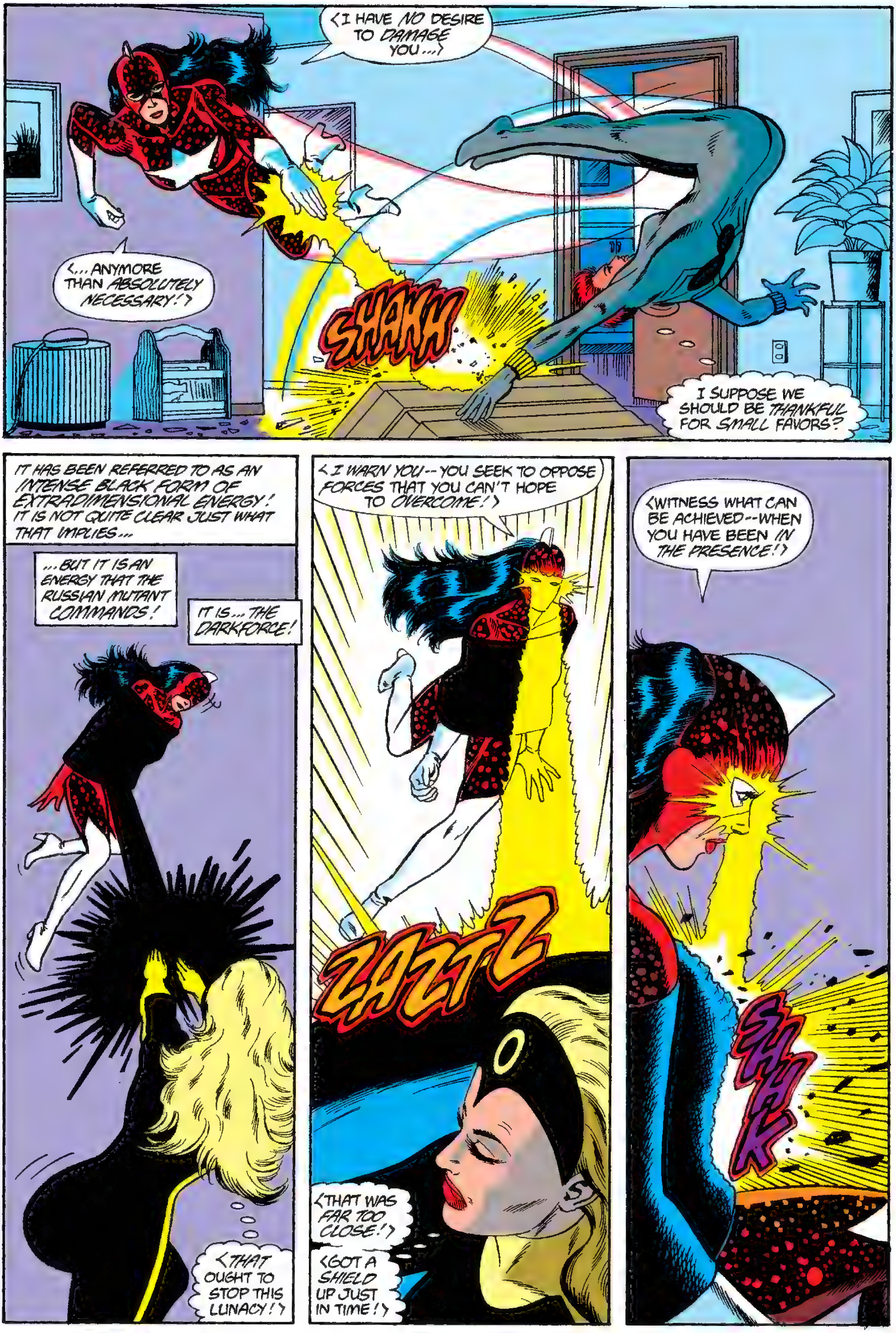
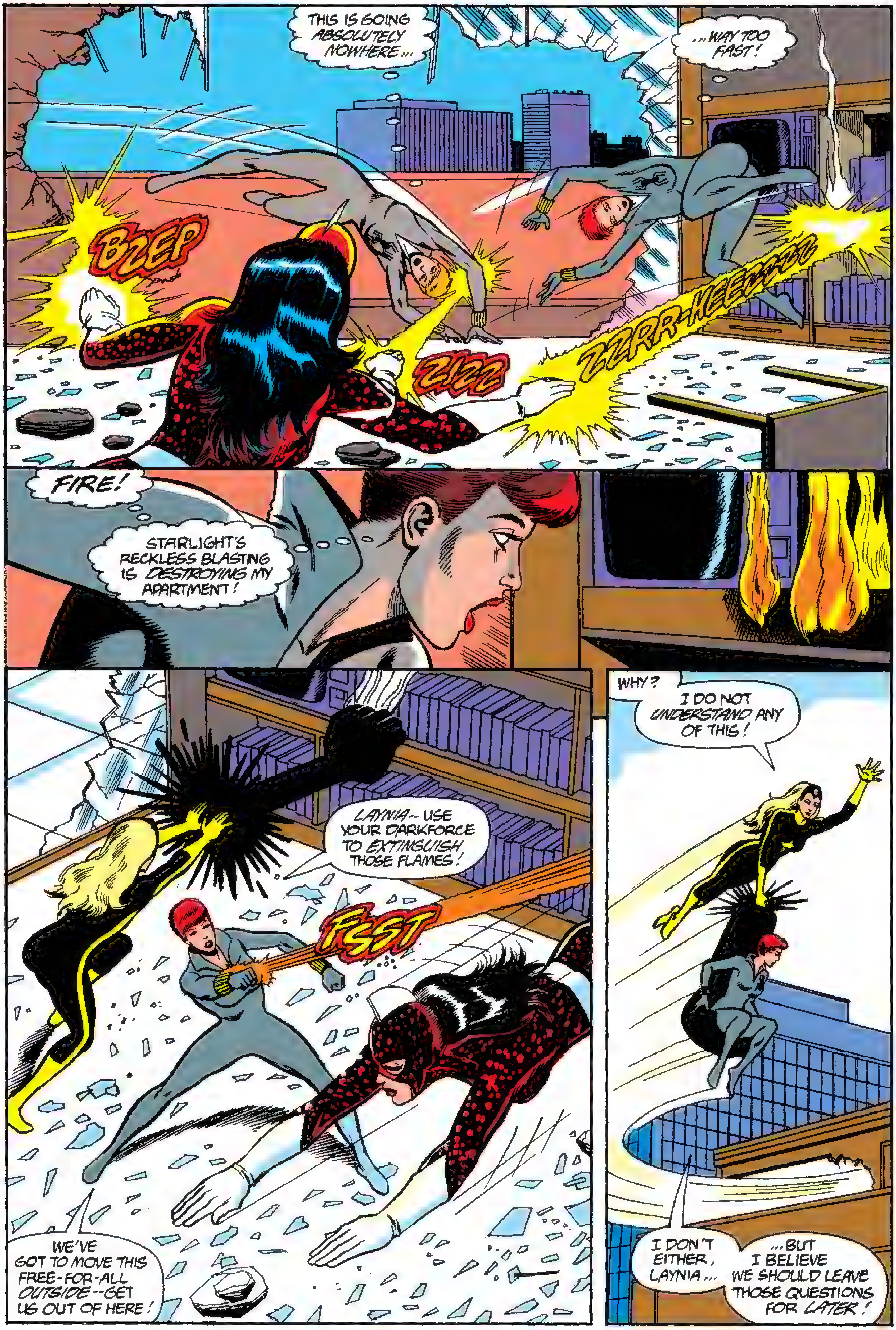

BLACK WIDOW, DARKSTAR & STARLIGHT
ONE INTO THREE WON'T GO!
NOTE: THIS STORY TAKES PLACE AFTER THE EVENTS OF QUASAR #19-24!
MIDTOWN MANHATTAN...
THIS IS LARRY KANE REPORTING LIVE--WHERE THE PRESS CONFERENCE THAT THE RUSSIAN SUPER HEROINE, DARKSTAR, HAS BEEN GIVING AS PART OF HER OFFICIAL DIPLOMATIC TOUR...
...HAS, MOST SUDDENLY, BEEN INTERRUPTED BY WHAT LOOKS TO BE...
...THE BLACK WIDOW!
WHAT WE ARE NOW WITNESSING, IN FULL VIEW OF DARKSTAR'S KGB ESCORT, IS YET ANOTHER SURPRISING EVENT...
...THANKS MOSTLY TO THE MORE RELAXED ATTITUDES ASSOCIATED WITH THE U.S.S.R.'S GLASNOST POLICY!
DARKSTAR, A FORMER MEMBER OF THE L.A.-BASED SUPER-GROUP, THE CHAMPIONS, IS CURRENTLY A MEMBER OF THE SOVIET SUPER-SOLDIERS!
7
7

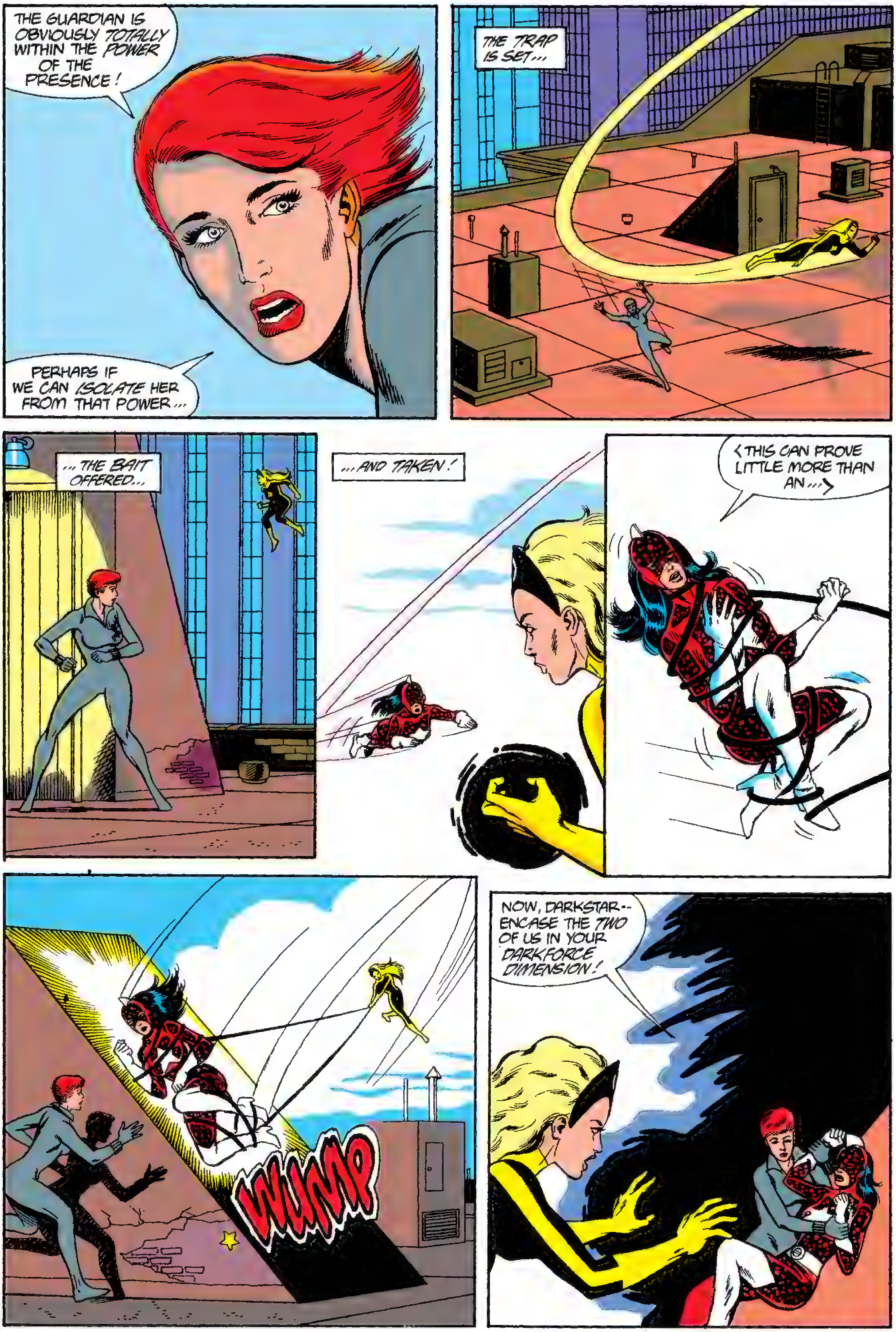

HIDDEN HIGH IN THE FROZEN EARTH-TALONS THAT ARE THE MOUNTAINS OF SIBERIA, A RANDOMLY MONITORED BROADCAST HAS CAPTIVATED THE ATTENTIONS OF SERGEI KRYLOV!
SERGEI KRYLOV, WHO, BY ACCIDENTALLY IRRADIATING HIMSELF DURING A NUCLEAR EXPERIMENT...
...HAS BECOME THE RADIATION POWERED PRESENCE!
...OF COURSE, THE BLACK WIDOW, WHO DEFECTED TO THE U.S. YEARS AGO--WAS ORIGINALLY A SOVIET AGENT!
UNTIL NOW, IT HAD BEEN HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT THESE TWO WOULD BE PERMITTED TO FREELY ASSOCIATE!
THE TWO WOMEN ARE LEAVING TOGETHER AND SEEM TO BE--
CLICK
I MUST HAVE THEM!
TOO LONG HAVE I CONTENTED MISELF WITH THE POSSESSION OF ONLY YOU-- STARLIGHT!
I, THE ULTIMATE RUSSIAN MAN!
MAN!? BAH--MORE UNTO A GOD! ISN'T IT ONLY FITTING THAT A SUPERIOR BEING SUCH AS I SHOULD HAVE ANY AND ALL OF THE VERY BEST THAT SOVIET WOMANHOOD HAS TO OFFER!?
YES...YES, I SHOULD.
GO!--BRING THEM!

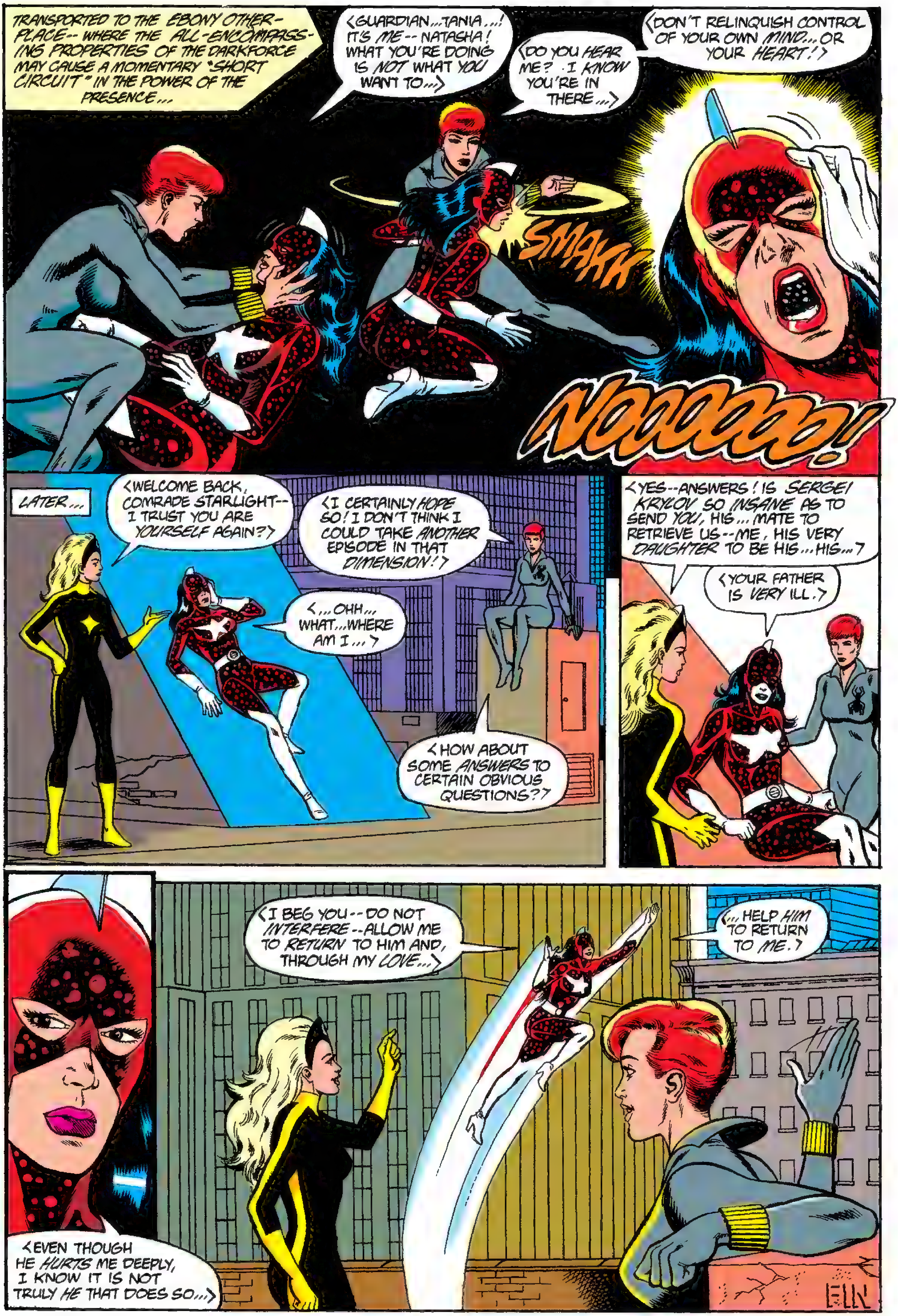

AFTER A LONG DAY...
YOU HAVE A LOVELY APARTMENT, NATASHA...
...AND IT HAS BEEN FAR TOO LONG SINCE I'VE EATEN FOOD SOLELY FOR ITS TASTE!
♪ "I HOPE THE RUSSIANS LOVE THEIR CHILDREN, TOO..."
STING
THIS "STING" AS YOU CALL HIM... WEAVES A VERY HAUNTING MELODY.
I THINK IT WILL BRING A SMILE TO THE FACE OF OUR AGING EX-MENTOR, ALEXEI BRUSKIN-- WHEN I RELATE TO HIM HOW YOU RISKED BEING SHOT BY THE K.G.B JUST TO INQUIRE AS TO HIS HEALTH.
I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE THAT WAS ME...
...BUT IT WAS-- A VERY DIFFERENT ME!
STING
THEN TOO, IT WAS A VERY DIFFERENT RUSSIA --IT WAS A RUSSIA THAT I COULD NO LONGER LOVE!
SOME OF US, COMRADE, STILL LOVE MOTHER RUSSIA!
WE REMAIN TRUE TO HER...
...AND SEEK TO CHANGE HER FOR THE GOOD--FROM INSIDE...

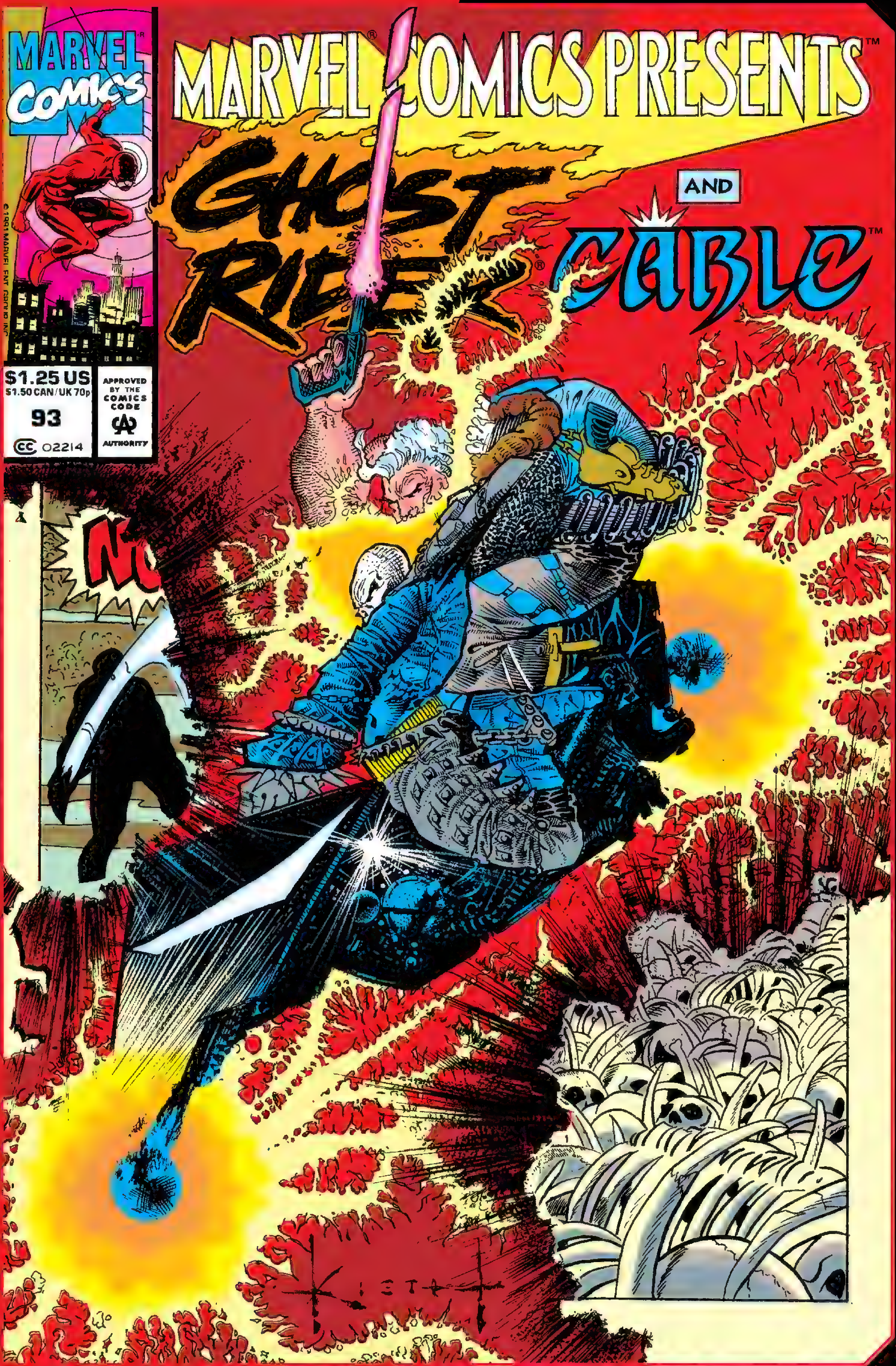

KAWHOOOM
WOK
<STAND FAST!>*
*TRANSLATED FROM RUSSIAN.--TK.
<KNOW THAT YOU HAVE BEEN GRANTED THE BOUNDLESS JOY OF JOINING WITH ME IN THE SERVICE OF OUR MASTER... COMRADE SERGEI KRYLOV!
<MASTER?>
<I'D HATE TO APPEAR LESS THAN GRATEFUL FOR RECEIVING THIS "HONOR"... RED GUARDIAN...
...BUT WE'RE NOT "JOINING WITH" ANYONE!>


<I HAVE NO DESIRE TO DAMAGE YOU...>
<...ANYMORE THAN ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY!>
SHAKK
I SUPPOSE WE SHOULD BE THANKFUL FOR SMALL FAVORS?
IT HAS BEEN REFERRED TO AS AN INTENSE BLACK FORM OF EXTRADIMENSIONAL ENERGY! IT IS NOT QUITE CLEAR JUST WHAT THAT IMPLIES...
...BUT IT IS AN ENERGY THAT THE RUSSIAN MUTANT COMMANDS!
IT IS... THE DARKFORCE!
<THAT OUGHT TO STOP THIS LUNACY!>
<I WARN YOU--YOU SEEK TO OPPOSE FORCES THAT YOU CAN'T HOPE TO OVERCOME!>
ZAZTZ
<THAT WAS FAR TOO CLOSE!>
<GOT A SHIELD UP JUST IN TIME!>
<WITNESS WHAT CAN BE ACHIEVED--WHEN YOU HAVE BEEN IN THE PRESENCE!>
SHAKK


THIS IS GOING ABSOLUTELY NOWHERE...
...WAY TOO FAST!
BZEP
ZIZZ
ZZRR-HEEZZZZ
FIRE!
STARLIGHT'S RECKLESS BLASTING IS *DESTROYING* MY APARTMENT!
LAYNIA-- USE YOUR DARKFORCE TO *EXTINGUISH* THOSE FLAMES!
FSST
WE'VE GOT TO MOVE THIS FREE-FOR-ALL *OUTSIDE*--GET US OUT OF HERE!
WHY?
I DO NOT *UNDERSTAND* ANY OF THIS!
I DON'T EITHER, LAYNIA...
...BUT I BELIEVE WE SHOULD LEAVE THOSE QUESTIONS FOR *LATER*!


THE GUARDIAN IS OBVIOUSLY TOTALLY WITHIN THE POWER OF THE PRESENCE!
PERHAPS IF WE CAN ISOLATE HER FROM THAT POWER...
THE TRAP IS SET...
...THE BAIT OFFERED...
...AND TAKEN!
<THIS CAN PROVE LITTLE MORE THAN AN...>
WUMP
NOW, DARKSTAR-- ENCASE THE TWO OF US IN YOUR DARKFORCE DIMENSION!


TRANSPORTED TO THE EBONY OTHER-PLACE-- WHERE THE ALL-ENCOMPASSING PROPERTIES OF THE DARKFORCE MAY CAUSE A MOMENTARY "SHORT CIRCUIT" IN THE POWER OF THE PRESENCE...
<GUARDIAN...TANIA...! IT'S ME--NATASHA! WHAT YOU'RE DOING IS NOT WHAT YOU WANT TO...>
<DO YOU HEAR ME? I KNOW YOU'RE IN THERE...>
<DON'T RELINQUISH CONTROL OF YOUR OWN MIND...OR YOUR HEART!>
SMAKK
NOOOOOO!
LATER...
<WELCOME BACK, COMRADE STARLIGHT-- I TRUST YOU ARE YOURSELF AGAIN?>
<...OHH... WHAT...WHERE AM I...>
<I CERTAINLY HOPE SO! I DON'T THINK I COULD TAKE ANOTHER EPISODE IN THAT DIMENSION!>
<HOW ABOUT SOME ANSWERS TO CERTAIN OBVIOUS QUESTIONS?>
<YES--ANSWERS! IS SERGEI KRYLOV SO INSANE AS TO SEND YOU, HIS...MATE TO RETRIEVE US--ME, HIS VERY DAUGHTER TO BE HIS...HIS...>
<YOUR FATHER IS VERY ILL.>
<EVEN THOUGH HE HURTS ME DEEPLY, I KNOW IT IS NOT TRULY HE THAT DOES SO...>
<I BEG YOU--DO NOT INTERFERE--ALLOW ME TO RETURN TO HIM AND, THROUGH MY LOVE...>
<...HELP HIM TO RETURN TO ME.>
ELN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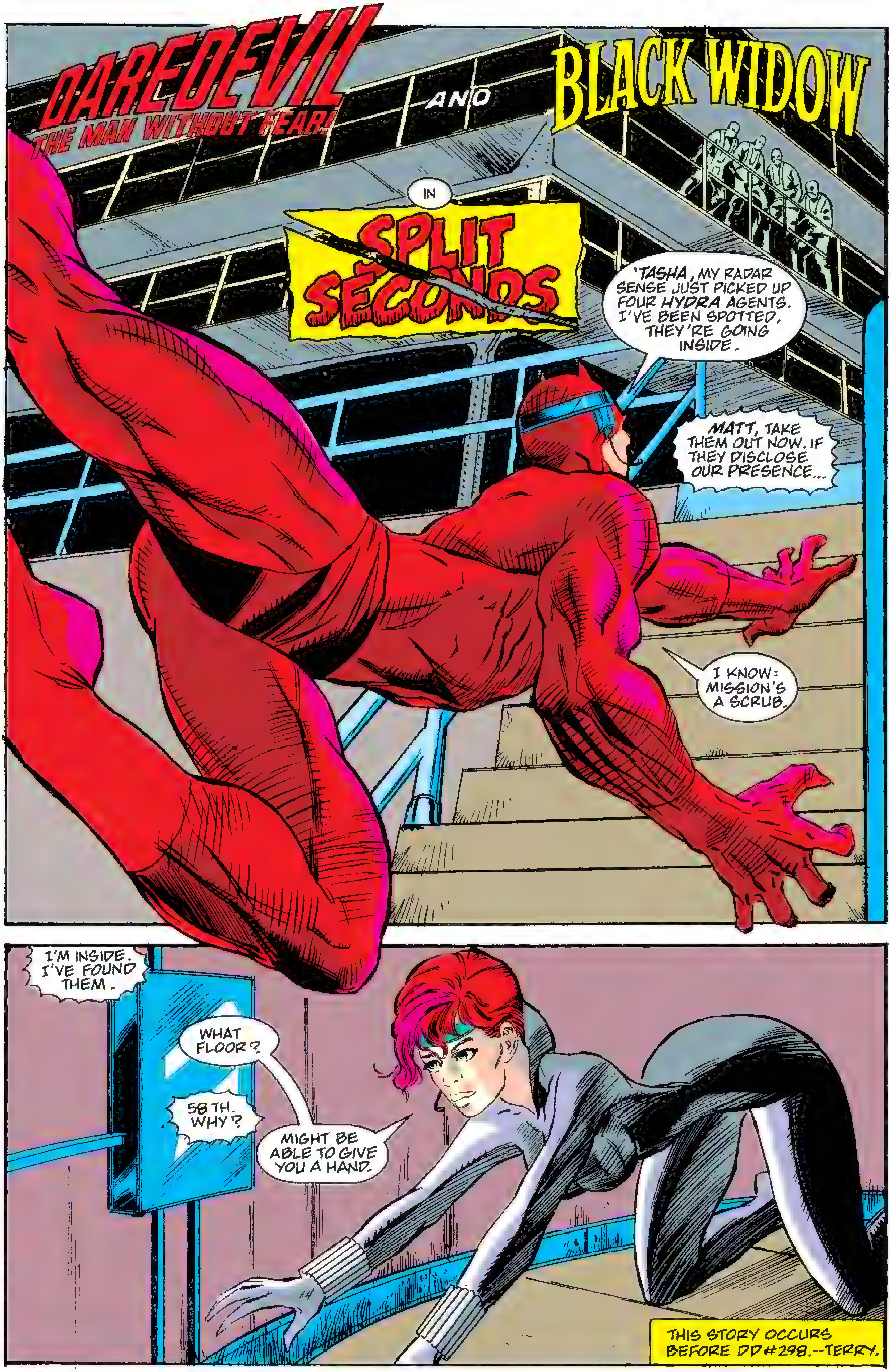
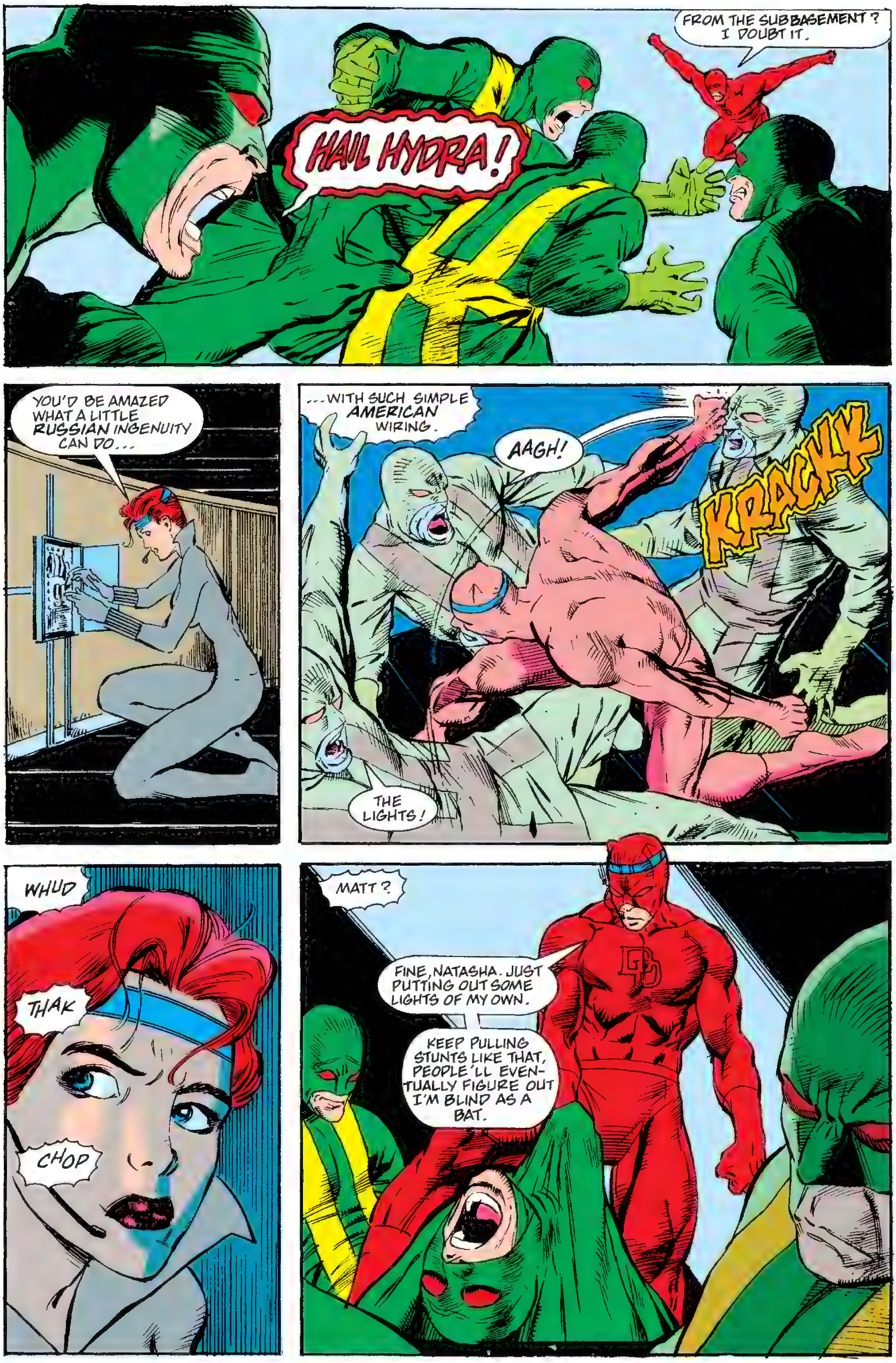
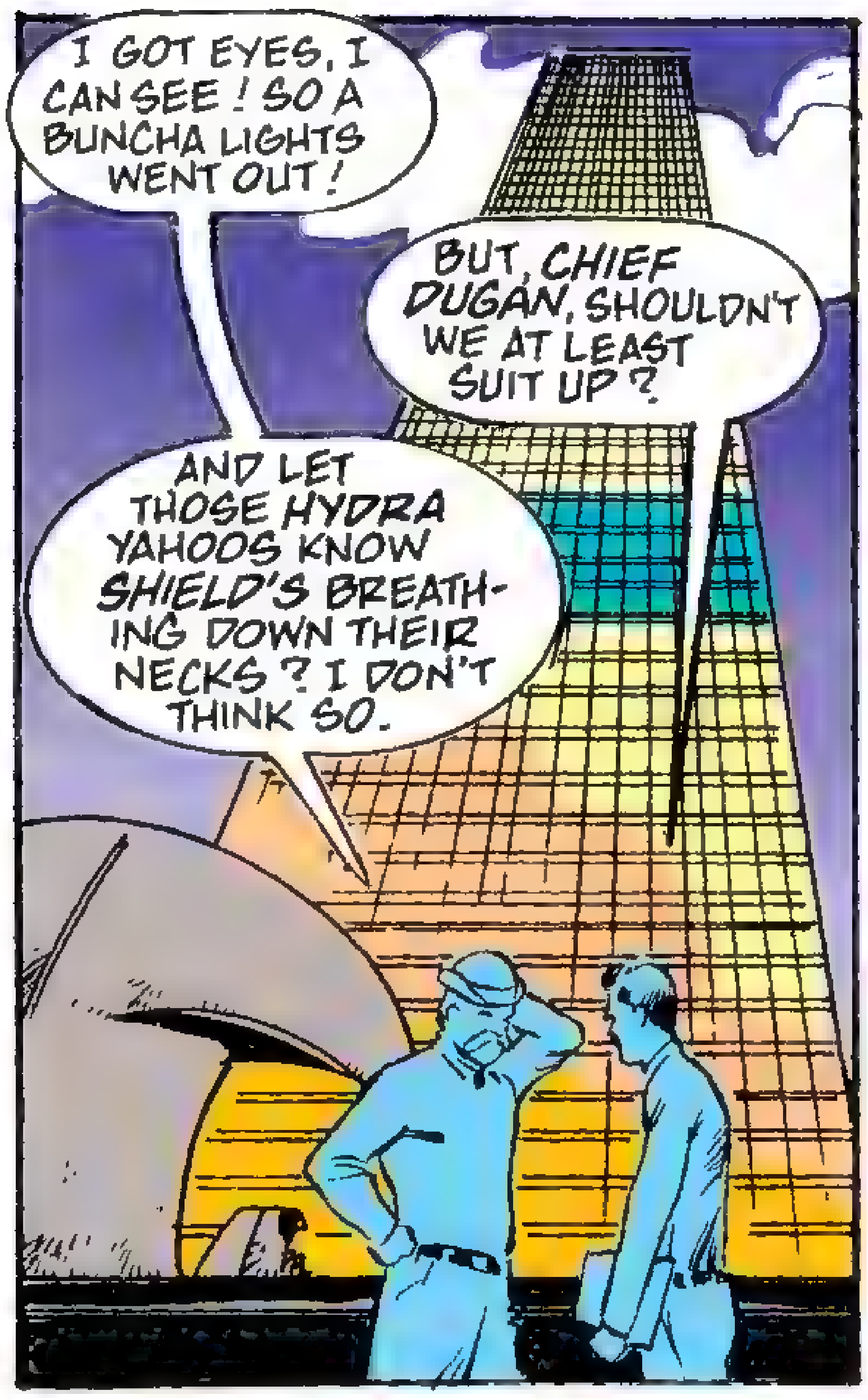
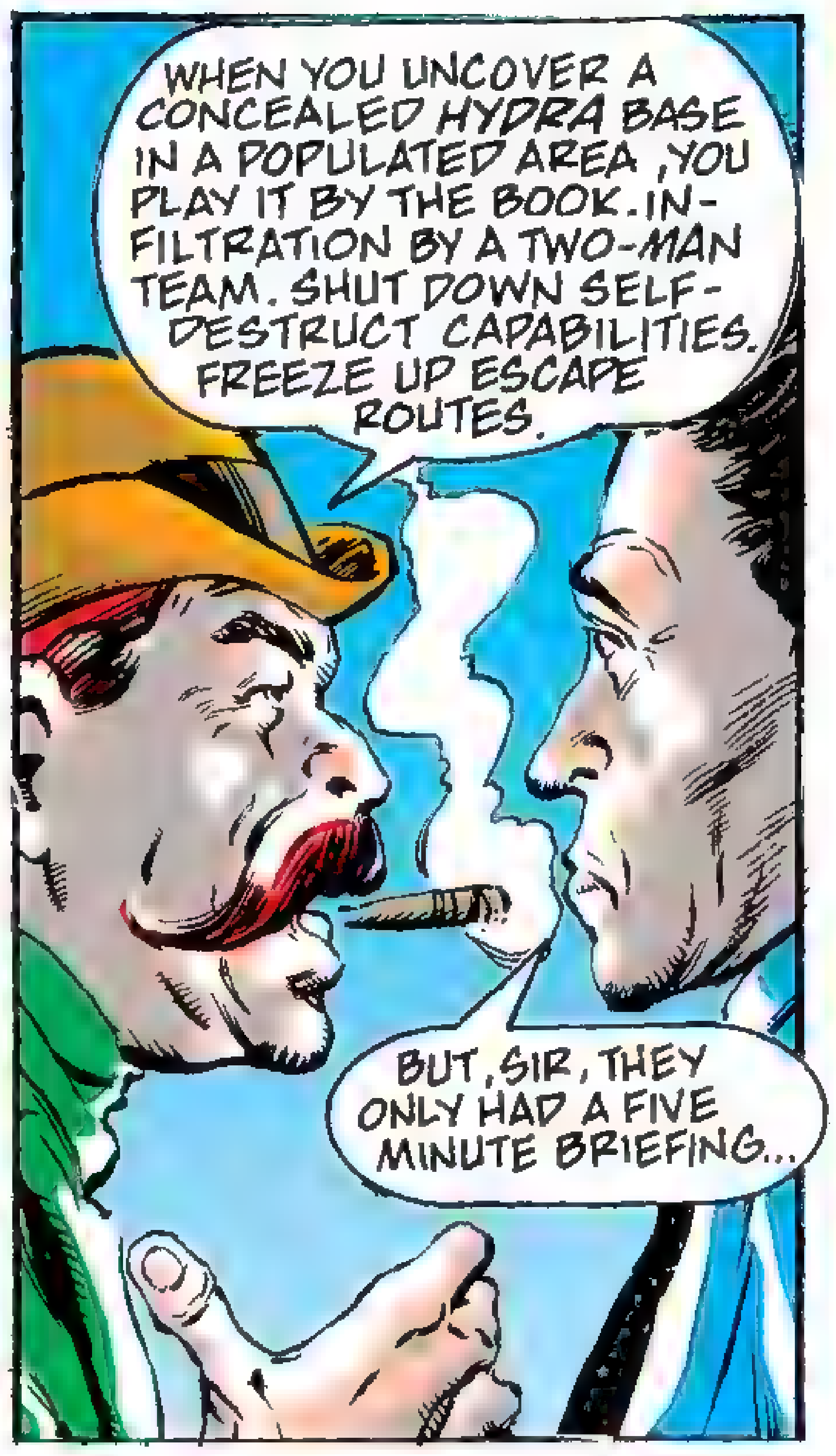
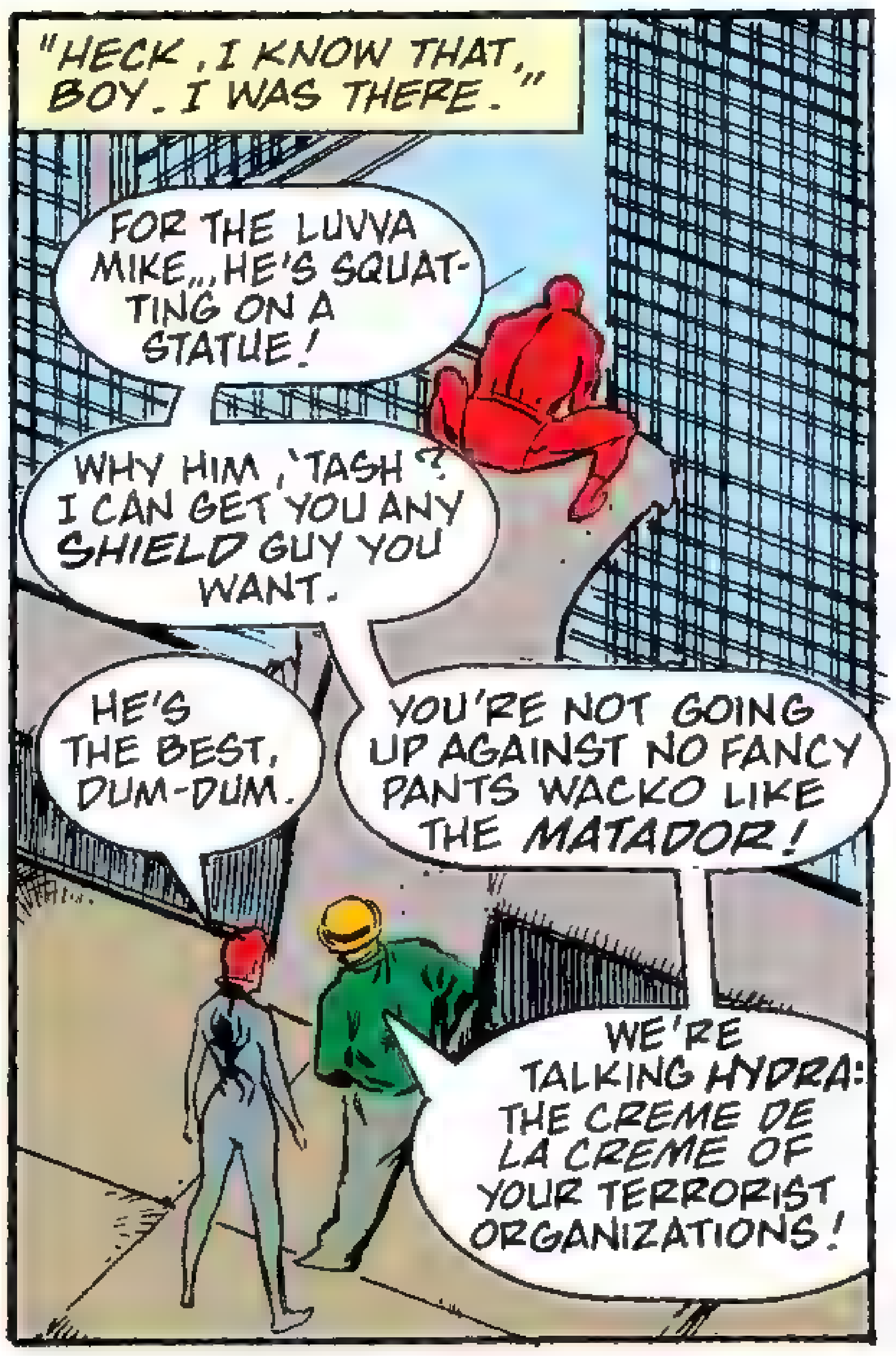
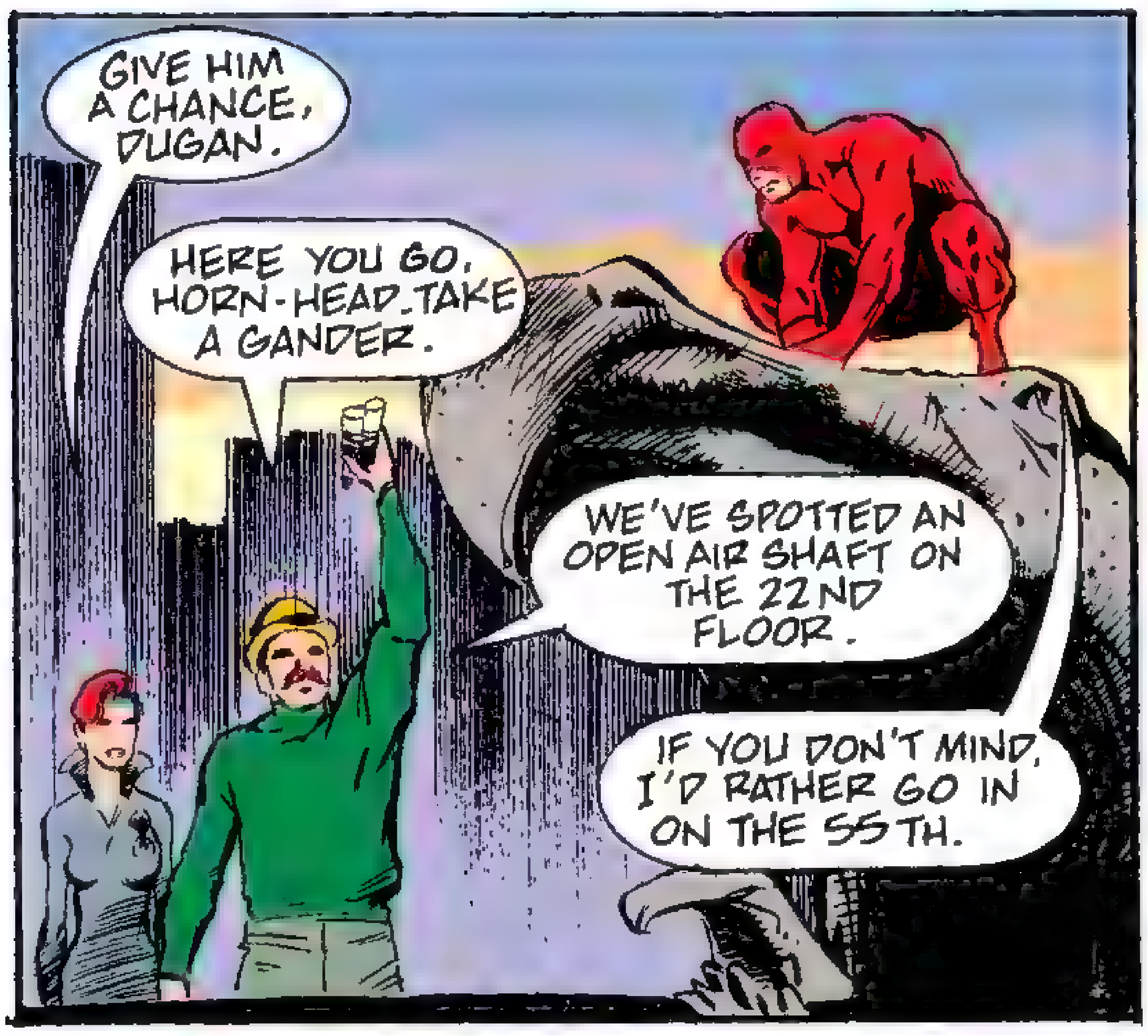

DAREDEVIL
THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!
AND
BLACK WIDOW
IN
SPLIT SECONDS
'TASHA, MY RADAR SENSE JUST PICKED UP FOUR *HYDRA* AGENTS. I'VE BEEN SPOTTED, THEY'RE GOING INSIDE.
MATT, TAKE THEM OUT NOW. IF THEY DISCLOSE OUR PRESENCE...
I KNOW: MISSION'S A SCRUB.
I'M INSIDE. I'VE FOUND THEM.
WHAT FLOOR?
58 TH. WHY?
MIGHT BE ABLE TO GIVE YOU A HAND.
THIS STORY OCCURS BEFORE DD #298.--TERRY.

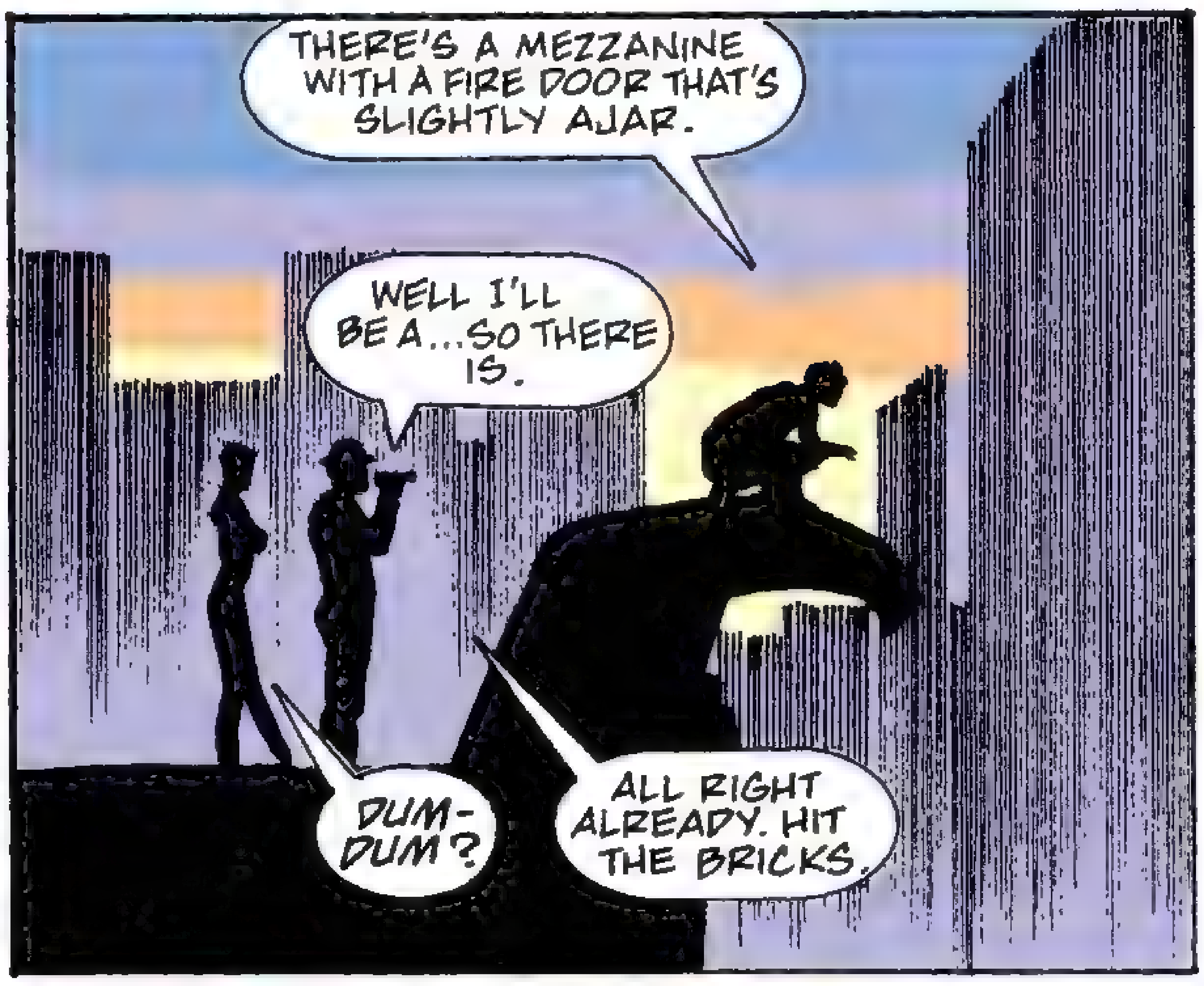

HAIL HYDRA!
FROM THE SUBBASEMENT? I DOUBT IT.
YOU'D BE AMAZED WHAT A LITTLE RUSSIAN INGENUITY CAN DO...
...WITH SUCH SIMPLE AMERICAN WIRING.
AAGH!
KRACKK
THE LIGHTS!
WHUD
THAK
CHOP
MATT?
FINE, NATASHA. JUST PUTTING OUT SOME LIGHTS OF MY OWN.
KEEP PULLING STUNTS LIKE THAT, PEOPLE'LL EVENTUALLY FIGURE OUT I'M BLIND AS A BAT.
DD

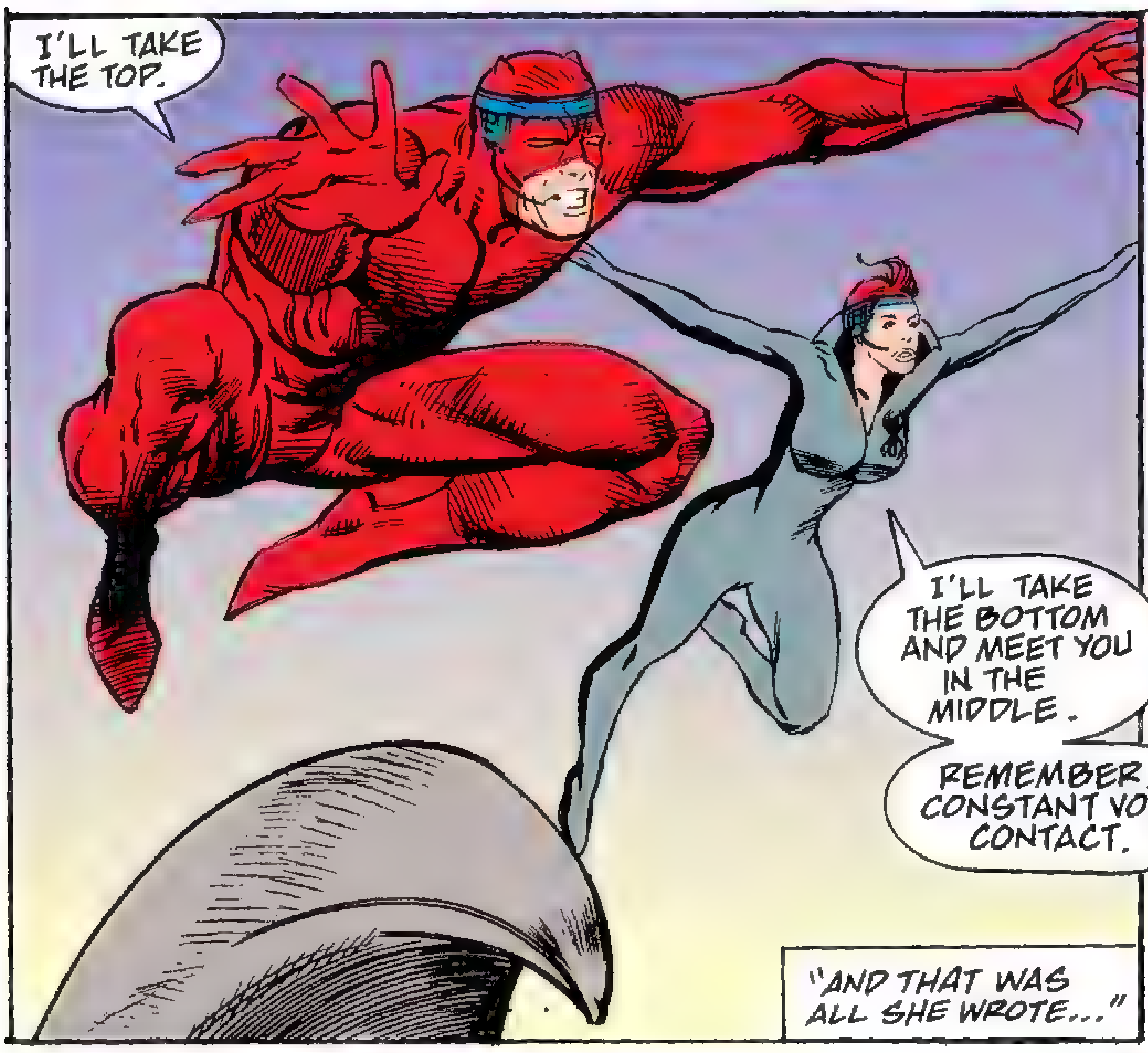

I GOT EYES, I CAN SEE! SO A BUNCHA LIGHTS WENT OUT!
BUT, CHIEF DUGAN, SHOULDN'T WE AT LEAST SUIT UP?
AND LET THOSE HYDRA YAHOOS KNOW SHIELD'S BREATHING DOWN THEIR NECKS? I DON'T THINK SO.

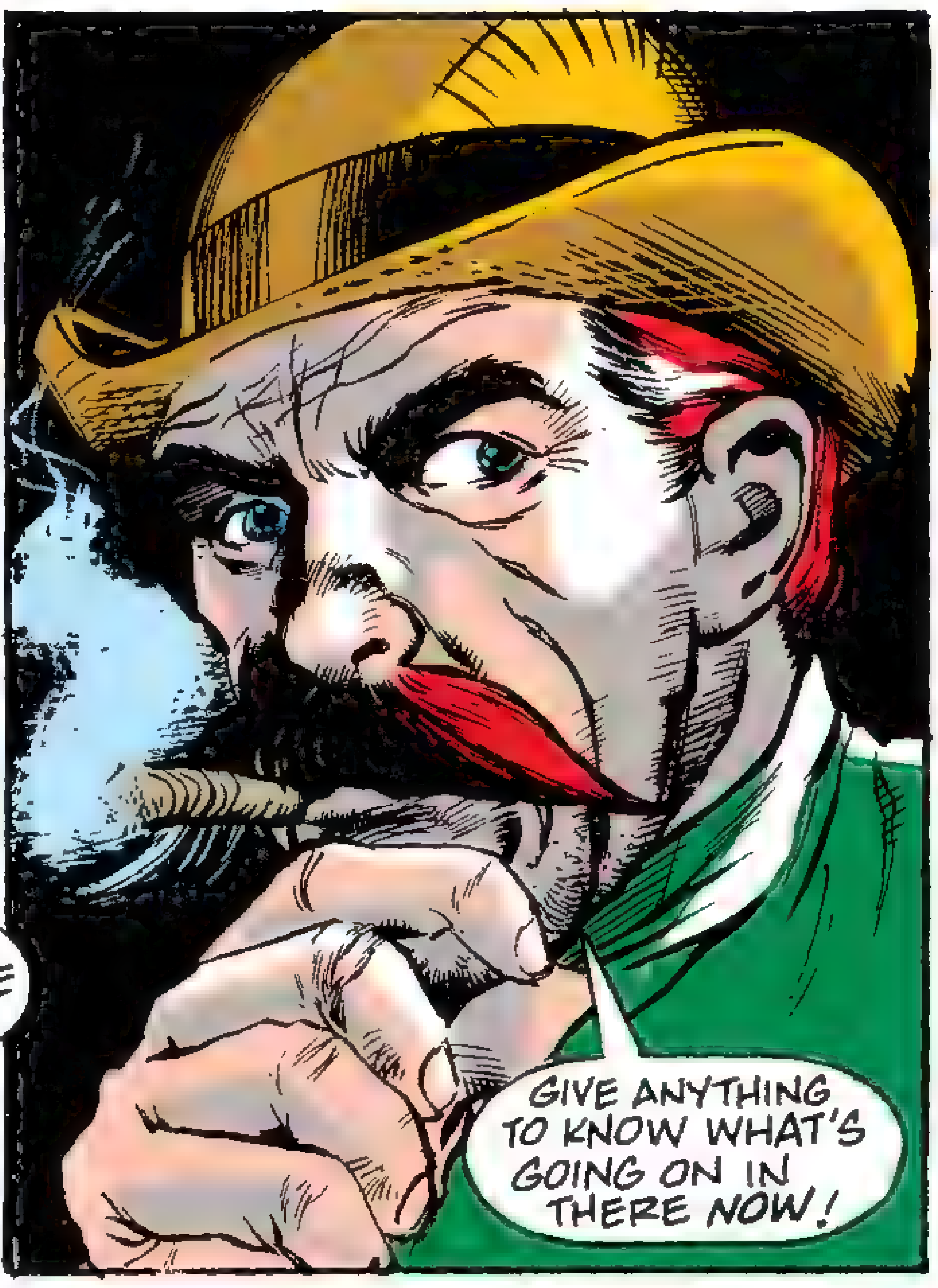

WHEN YOU UNCOVER A CONCEALED HYDRA BASE IN A POPULATED AREA, YOU PLAY IT BY THE BOOK. INFILTRATION BY A TWO-MAN TEAM. SHUT DOWN SELF-DESTRUCT CAPABILITIES. FREEZE UP ESCAPE ROUTES.
BUT, SIR, THEY ONLY HAD A FIVE MINUTE BRIEFING...

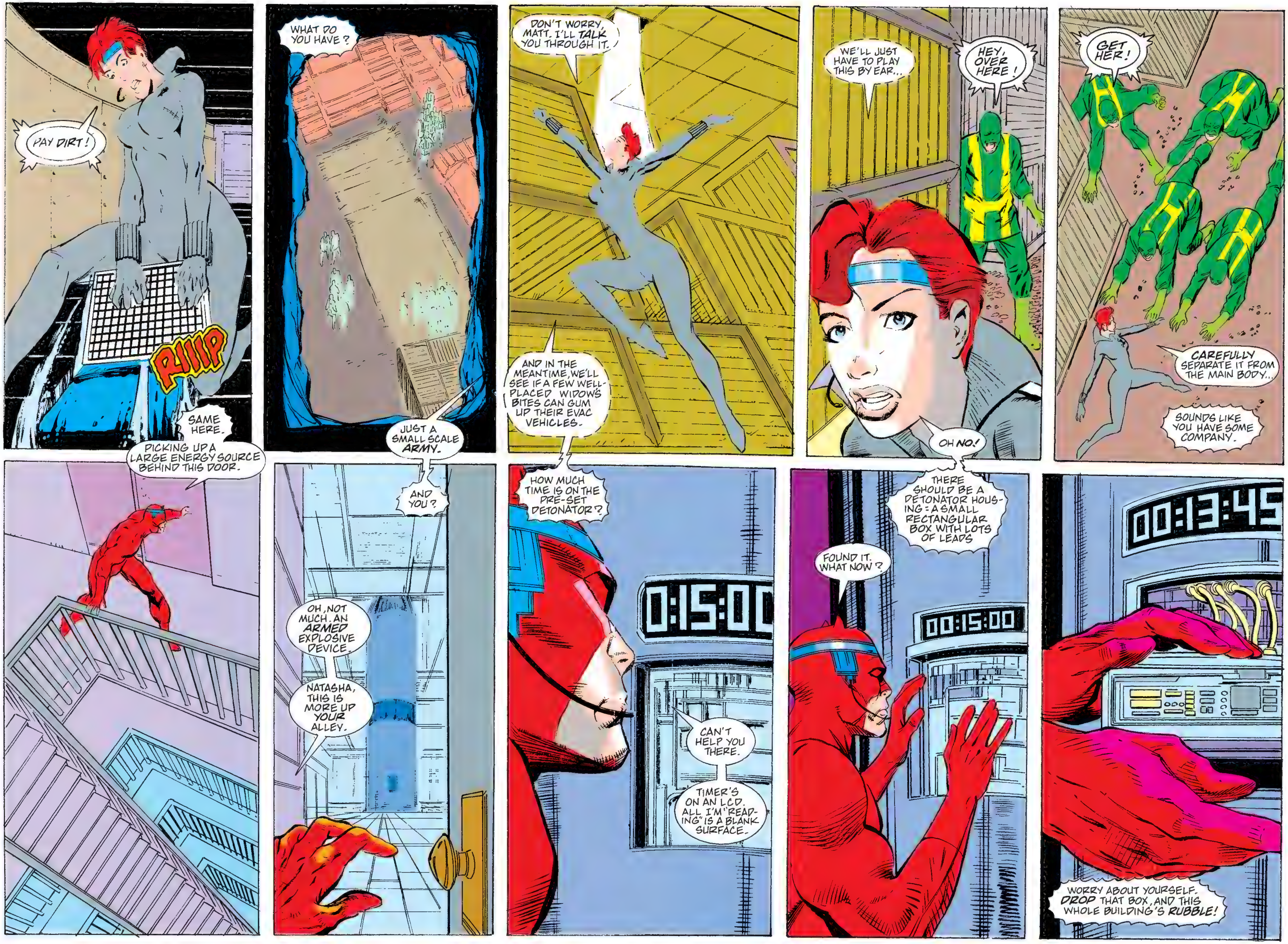

"HECK, I KNOW THAT, BOY. I WAS THERE."
FOR THE LUVVA MIKE... HE'S SQUATTING ON A STATUE!
WHY HIM, 'TASH? I CAN GET YOU ANY SHIELD GUY YOU WANT.
HE'S THE BEST, DUM-DUM.
YOU'RE NOT GOING UP AGAINST NO FANCY PANTS WACKO LIKE THE MATADOR!
WE'RE TALKING HYDRA: THE CREME DE LA CREME OF YOUR TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS!

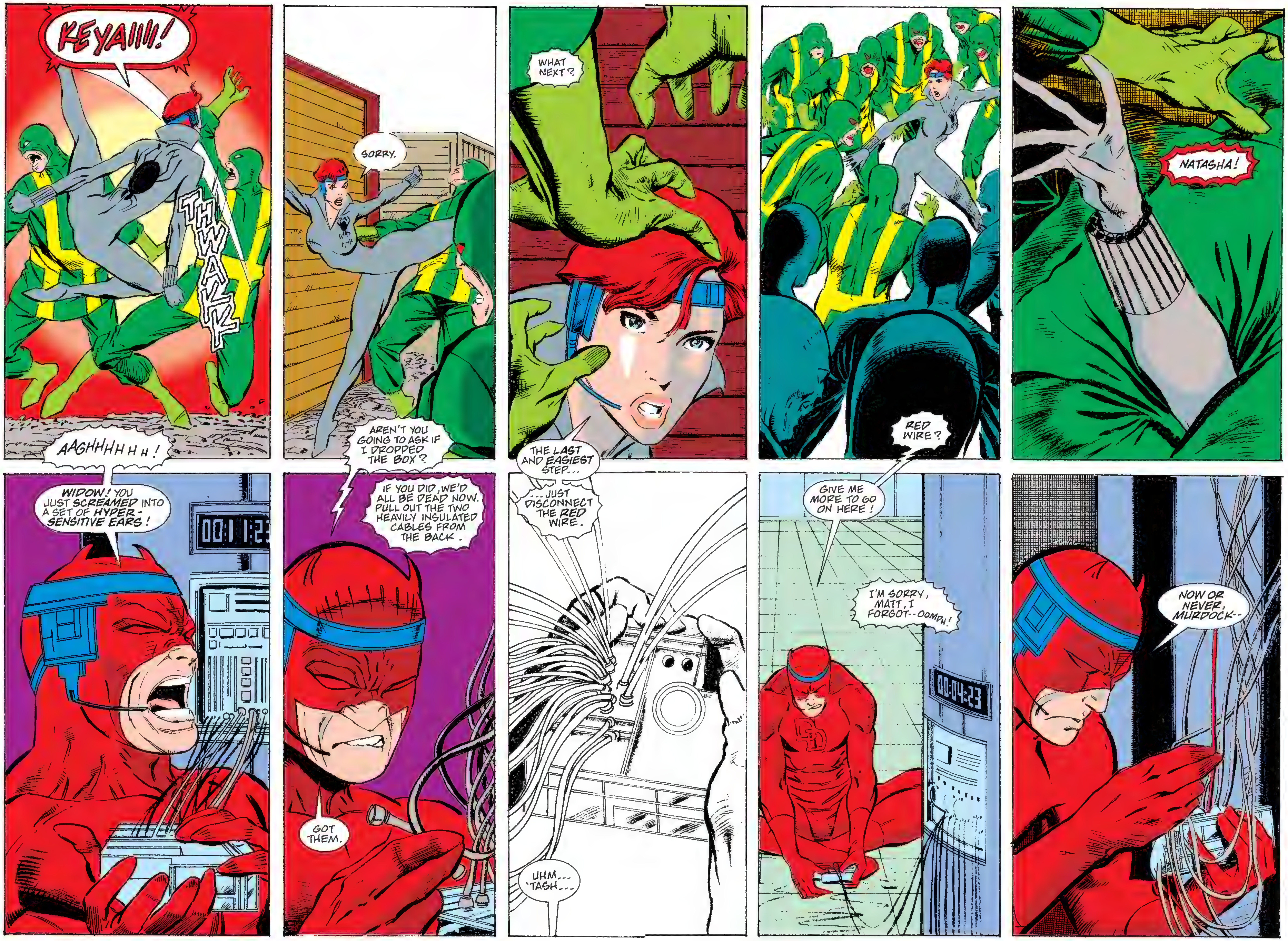

GIVE HIM A CHANCE, DUGAN.
HERE YOU GO, HORN-HEAD. TAKE A GANDER.
WE'VE SPOTTED AN OPEN AIR SHAFT ON THE 22ND FLOOR.
IF YOU DON'T MIND, I'D RATHER GO IN ON THE 55TH.

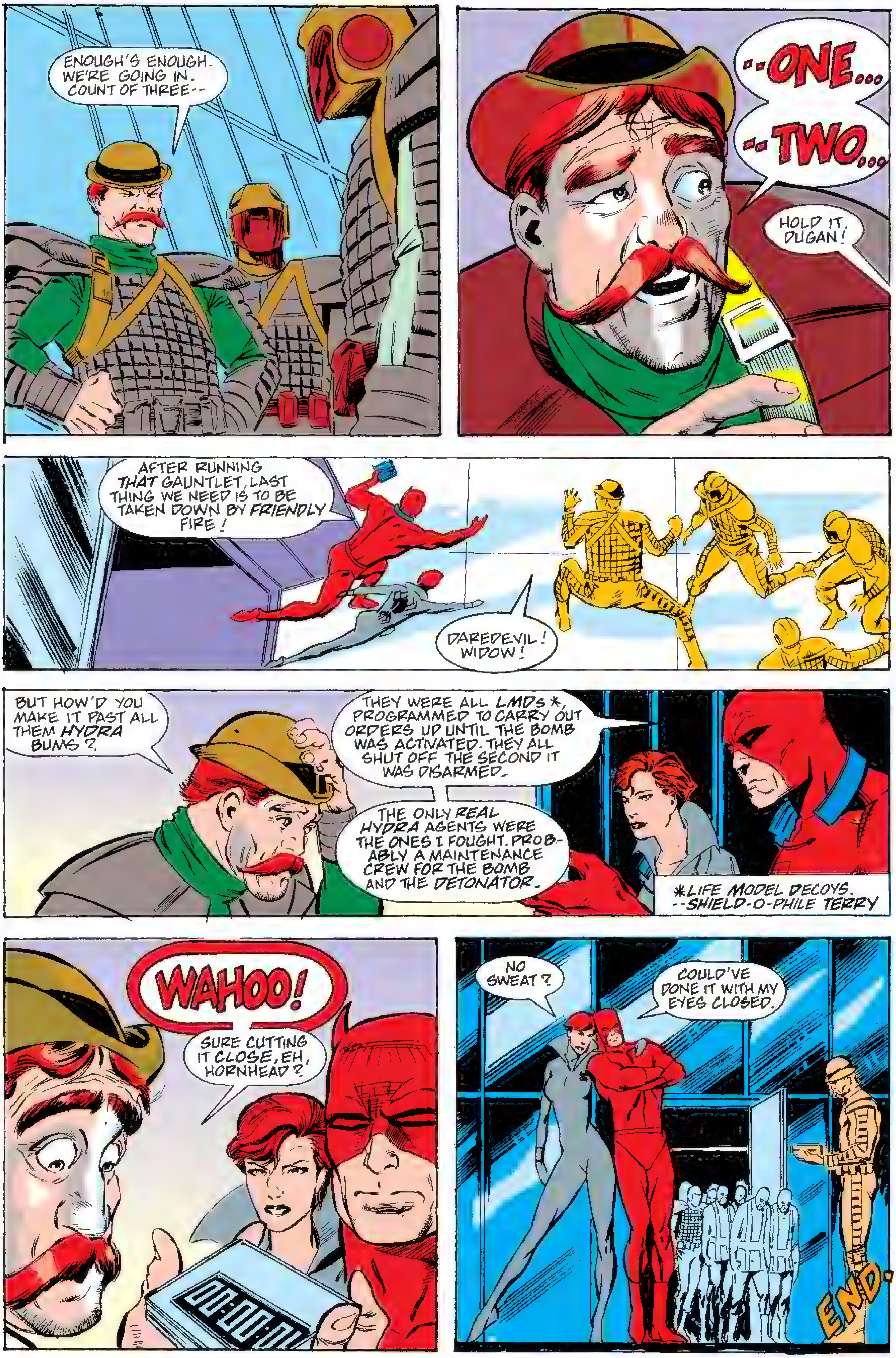

THERE'S A MEZZANINE WITH A FIRE DOOR THAT'S SLIGHTLY AJAR.
WELL I'LL BE A... SO THERE IS.
DUM-DUM?
ALL RIGHT ALREADY. HIT THE BRICKS.

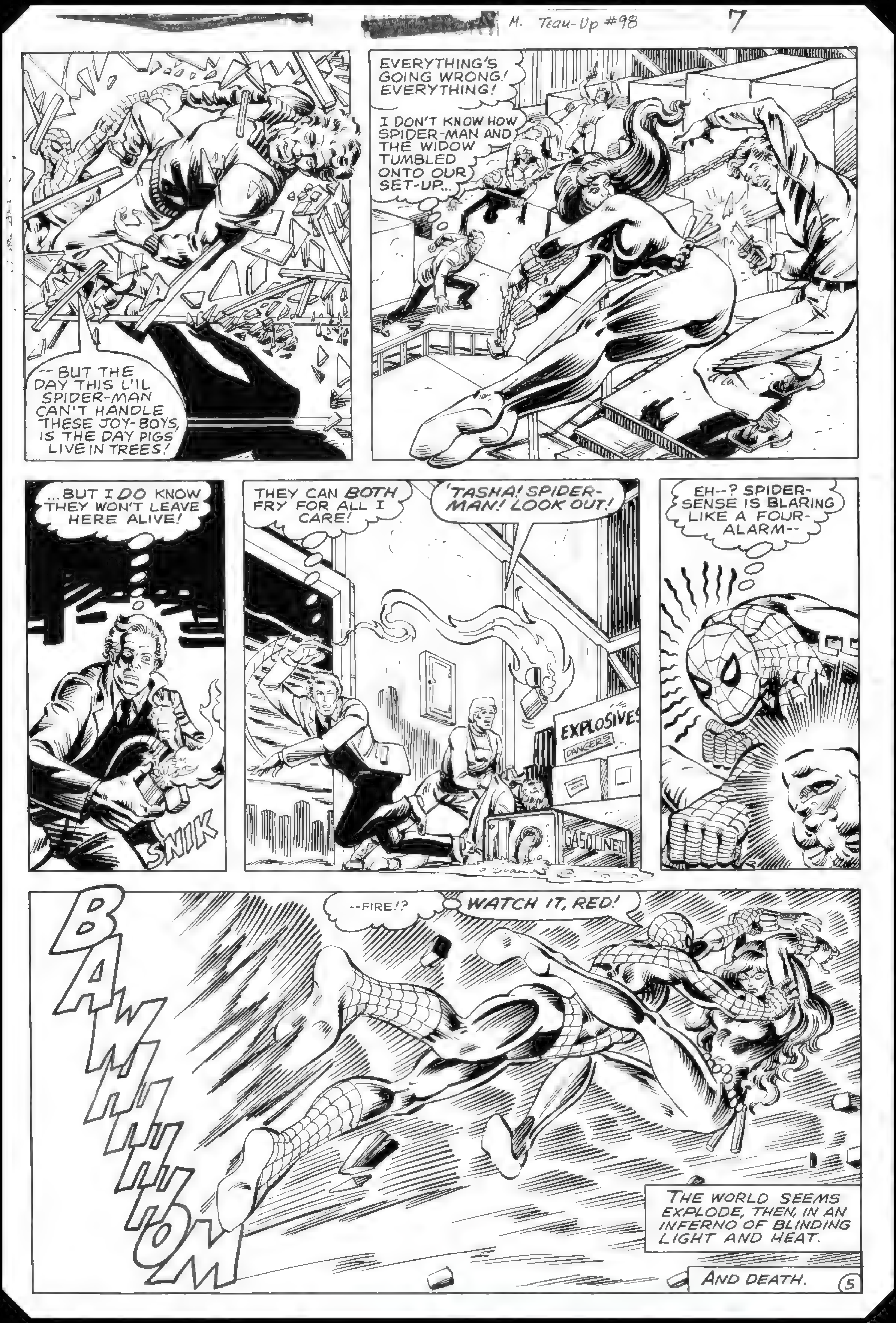

I'LL TAKE THE TOP.
I'LL TAKE THE BOTTOM AND MEET YOU IN THE MIDDLE.
REMEMBER, CONSTANT VOICE CONTACT.
"AND THAT WAS ALL SHE WROTE..."


GIVE ANYTHING TO KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON IN THERE NOW!


PAY DIRT!
RIIIP
SAME HERE.
PICKING UP A LARGE ENERGY SOURCE BEHIND THIS DOOR.
WHAT DO YOU HAVE?
JUST A SMALL SCALE ARMY.
AND YOU?
OH, NOT MUCH. AN ARMED EXPLOSIVE DEVICE.
NATASHA, THIS IS MORE UP YOUR ALLEY.
DON'T WORRY, MATT. I'LL TALK YOU THROUGH IT.
AND IN THE MEANTIME, WE'LL SEE IF A FEW WELL-PLACED WIDOW'S BITES CAN GUM UP THEIR EVAC VEHICLES.
HOW MUCH TIME IS ON THE PRE-SET DETONATOR?
0:15:00
CAN'T HELP YOU THERE.
TIMER'S ON AN LCD. ALL I'M "READING" IS A BLANK SURFACE.
WE'LL JUST HAVE TO PLAY THIS BY EAR...
HEY, OVER HERE!
OH NO!
THERE SHOULD BE A DETONATOR HOUSING: A SMALL RECTANGULAR BOX WITH LOTS OF LEADS.
FOUND IT. WHAT NOW?
00:15:00
GET HER!
CAREFULLY SEPARATE IT FROM THE MAIN BODY...
SOUNDS LIKE YOU HAVE SOME COMPANY.
00:13:45
WORRY ABOUT YOURSELF. DROP THAT BOX, AND THIS WHOLE BUILDING'S RUBBLE!


KEYAIII!
THWAKK
AAGHHHHHH!
WIDOW! YOU JUST SCREAMED INTO A SET OF HYPER-SENSITIVE EARS!
00:11:23
SORRY.
AREN'T YOU GOING TO ASK IF I DROPPED THE BOX?
IF YOU DID, WE'D ALL BE DEAD NOW. PULL OUT THE TWO HEAVILY INSULATED CABLES FROM THE BACK.
GOT THEM.
WHAT NEXT?
THE LAST AND EASIEST STEP...
...JUST DISCONNECT THE RED WIRE.
UHM... 'TASH...
RED WIRE?
GIVE ME MORE TO GO ON HERE!
I'M SORRY, MATT, I FORGOT--OOMPH!
00:04:23
NATASHA!
NOW OR NEVER, MURDOCK--


ENOUGH'S ENOUGH. WE'RE GOING IN. COUNT OF THREE--
--ONE...
--TWO...
HOLD IT, DUGAN!
AFTER RUNNING *THAT* GAUNTLET, LAST THING WE NEED IS TO BE TAKEN DOWN BY *FRIENDLY* FIRE!
DAREDEVIL! WIDOW!
BUT HOW'D YOU MAKE IT PAST ALL THEM *HYDRA* BUMS?
THEY WERE ALL *LMDs*✱, PROGRAMMED TO CARRY OUT ORDERS UP UNTIL THE BOMB WAS ACTIVATED. THEY ALL SHUT OFF THE SECOND IT WAS DISARMED.
THE ONLY *REAL HYDRA* AGENTS WERE THE ONES I FOUGHT. PROBABLY A MAINTENANCE CREW FOR THE BOMB AND THE *DETONATOR*.
✱*LIFE MODEL DECOYS. --SHIELD-O-PHILE TERRY*
WAHOO!
SURE CUTTING IT *CLOSE*, EH, HORNHEAD?
00:00:01
NO SWEAT?
COULD'VE DONE IT WITH MY EYES CLOSED.
END.


M. Team-Up #98
7
-- BUT THE DAY THIS L'IL SPIDER-MAN CAN'T HANDLE THESE JOY-BOYS, IS THE DAY PIGS LIVE IN TREES!
EVERYTHING'S GOING WRONG! EVERYTHING!
I DON'T KNOW HOW SPIDER-MAN AND THE WIDOW TUMBLED ONTO OUR SET-UP...
...BUT I DO KNOW THEY WON'T LEAVE HERE ALIVE!
SNIK
THEY CAN BOTH FRY FOR ALL I CARE!
'TASHA! SPIDER-MAN! LOOK OUT!
EXPLOSIVES
DANGER
GASOLINE
EH--? SPIDER-SENSE IS BLARING LIKE A FOUR-ALARM--
BAWHHHOOM
--FIRE!?
WATCH IT, RED!
THE WORLD SEEMS EXPLODE, THEN, IN AN INFERNO OF BLINDING LIGHT AND HEAT.
AND DEATH.
5

MARVEL TEAM-UP #98, PAGE 5 ART BY **WILL MEUGNIOT** & **BRUCE PATTERSON**

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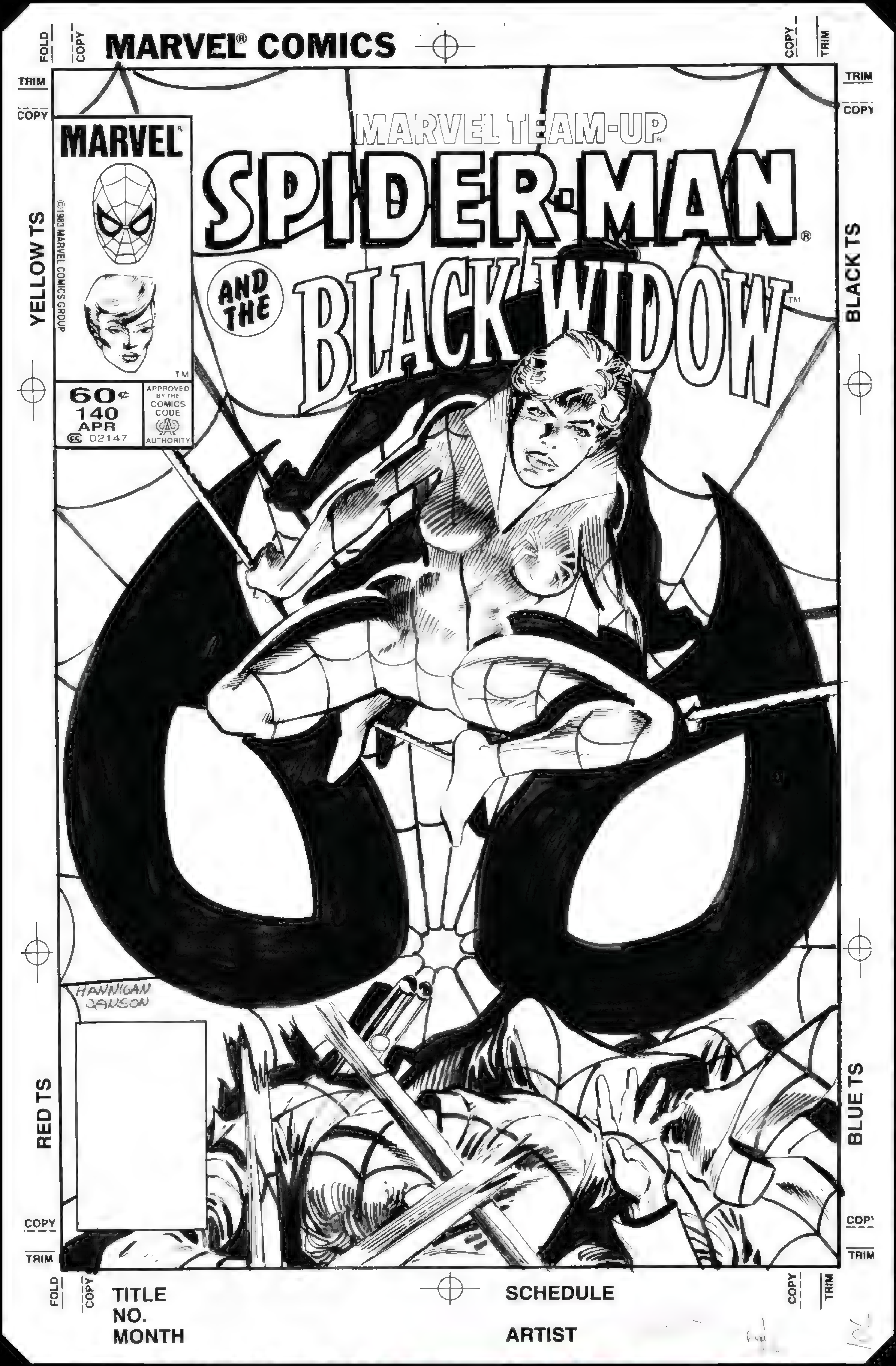
MARVEL® COMICS
MARVEL TEAM-UP
SPIDER-MAN®
AND THE
BLACK WIDOW™
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HANNIGAN
JANSON
FOLD
COPY
TRIM
YELLOW TS
BLACK TS
RED TS
BLUE TS
TITLE
NO.
MONTH
SCHEDULE
ARTIST

MARVEL TEAM-UP #140 COVER ART BY ED HANNIGAN & KLAUS JANSON

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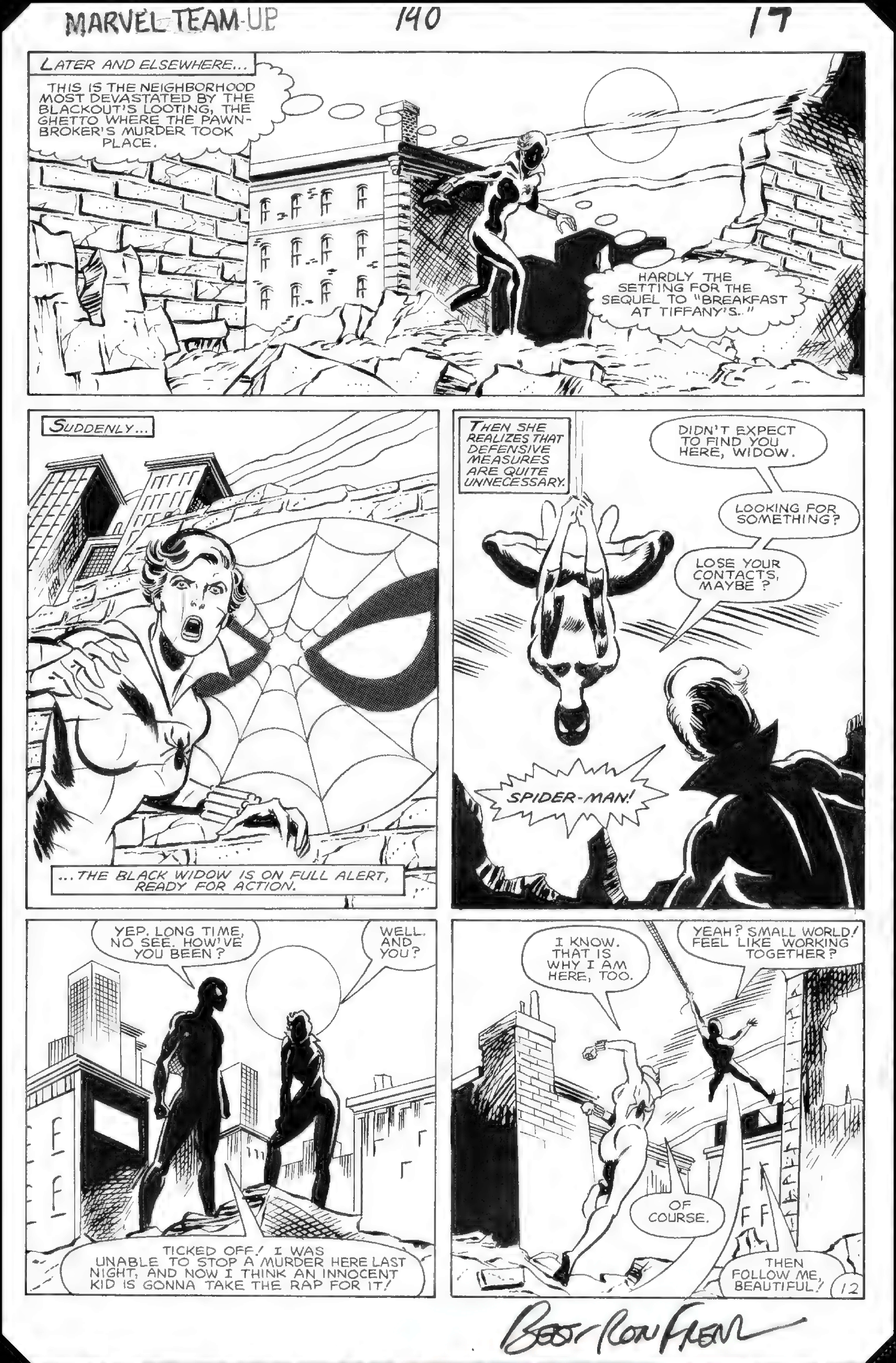
MARVEL TEAM-UP 140 17
LATER AND ELSEWHERE...
THIS IS THE NEIGHBORHOOD MOST DEVASTATED BY THE BLACKOUT'S LOOTING, THE GHETTO WHERE THE PAWNBROKER'S MURDER TOOK PLACE.
HARDLY THE SETTING FOR THE SEQUEL TO "BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S."
SUDDENLY...
...THE BLACK WIDOW IS ON FULL ALERT, READY FOR ACTION.
THEN SHE REALIZES THAT DEFENSIVE MEASURES ARE QUITE UNNECESSARY.
DIDN'T EXPECT TO FIND YOU HERE, WIDOW.
LOOKING FOR SOMETHING?
LOSE YOUR CONTACTS, MAYBE?
SPIDER-MAN!
YEP. LONG TIME, NO SEE. HOW'VE YOU BEEN?
WELL. AND YOU?
TICKED OFF! I WAS UNABLE TO STOP A MURDER HERE LAST NIGHT, AND NOW I THINK AN INNOCENT KID IS GONNA TAKE THE RAP FOR IT!
I KNOW. THAT IS WHY I AM HERE, TOO.
YEAH? SMALL WORLD! FEEL LIKE WORKING TOGETHER?
OF COURSE.
THEN FOLLOW ME, BEAUTIFUL!
12
Best, Ron Frenz

MARVEL TEAM-UP #140, PAGE 12 ART BY **RON FRENZ** & **MIKE ESPOSITO**

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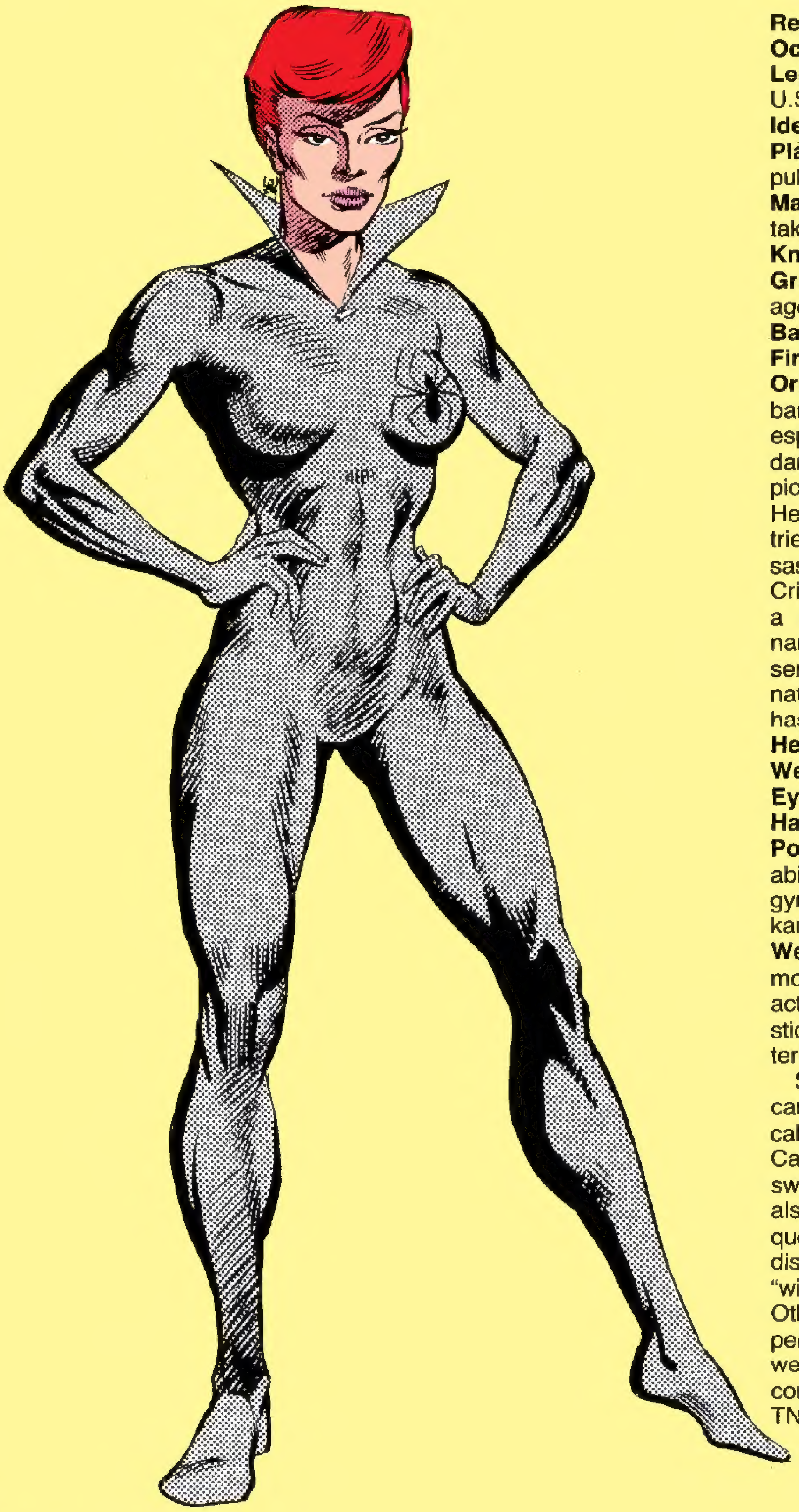
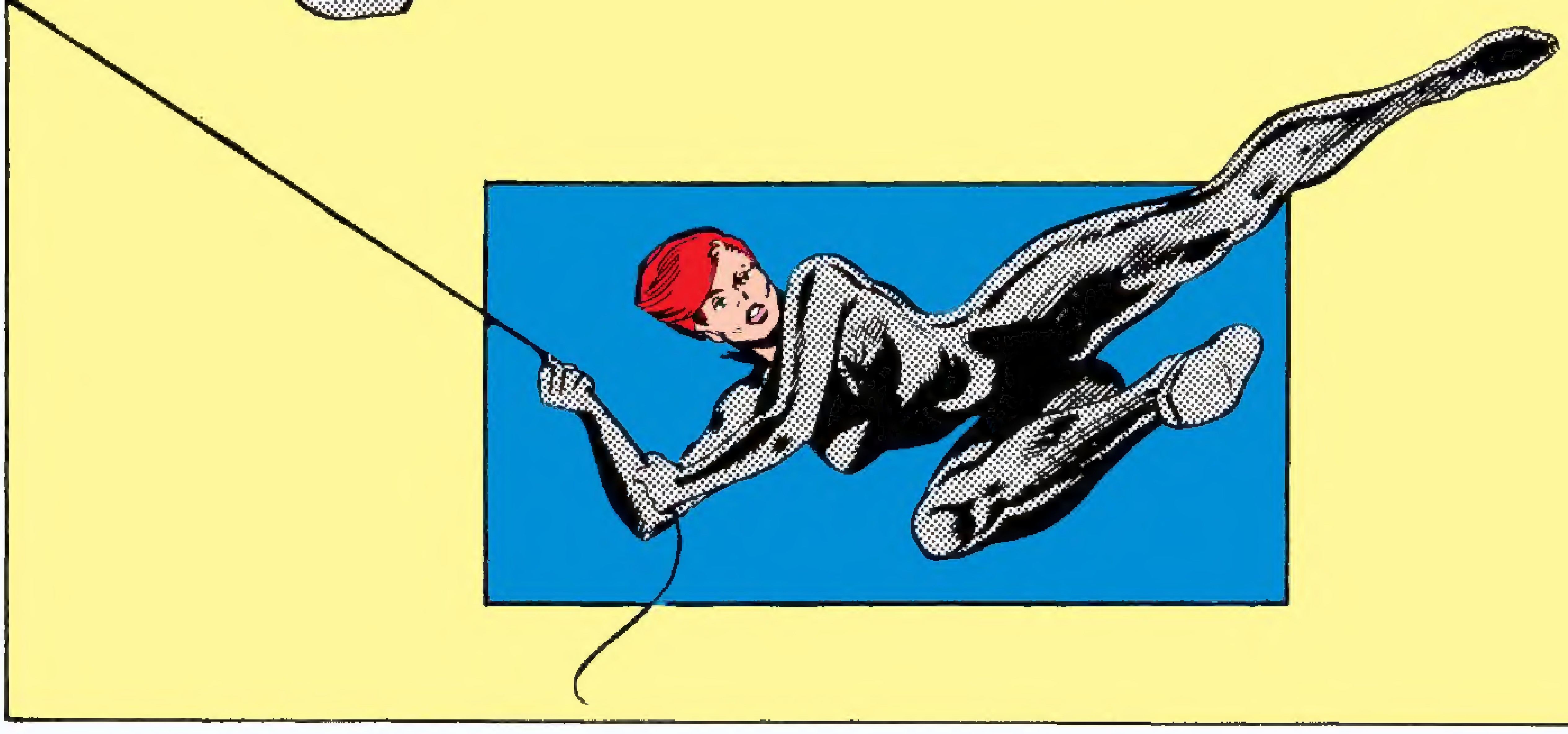


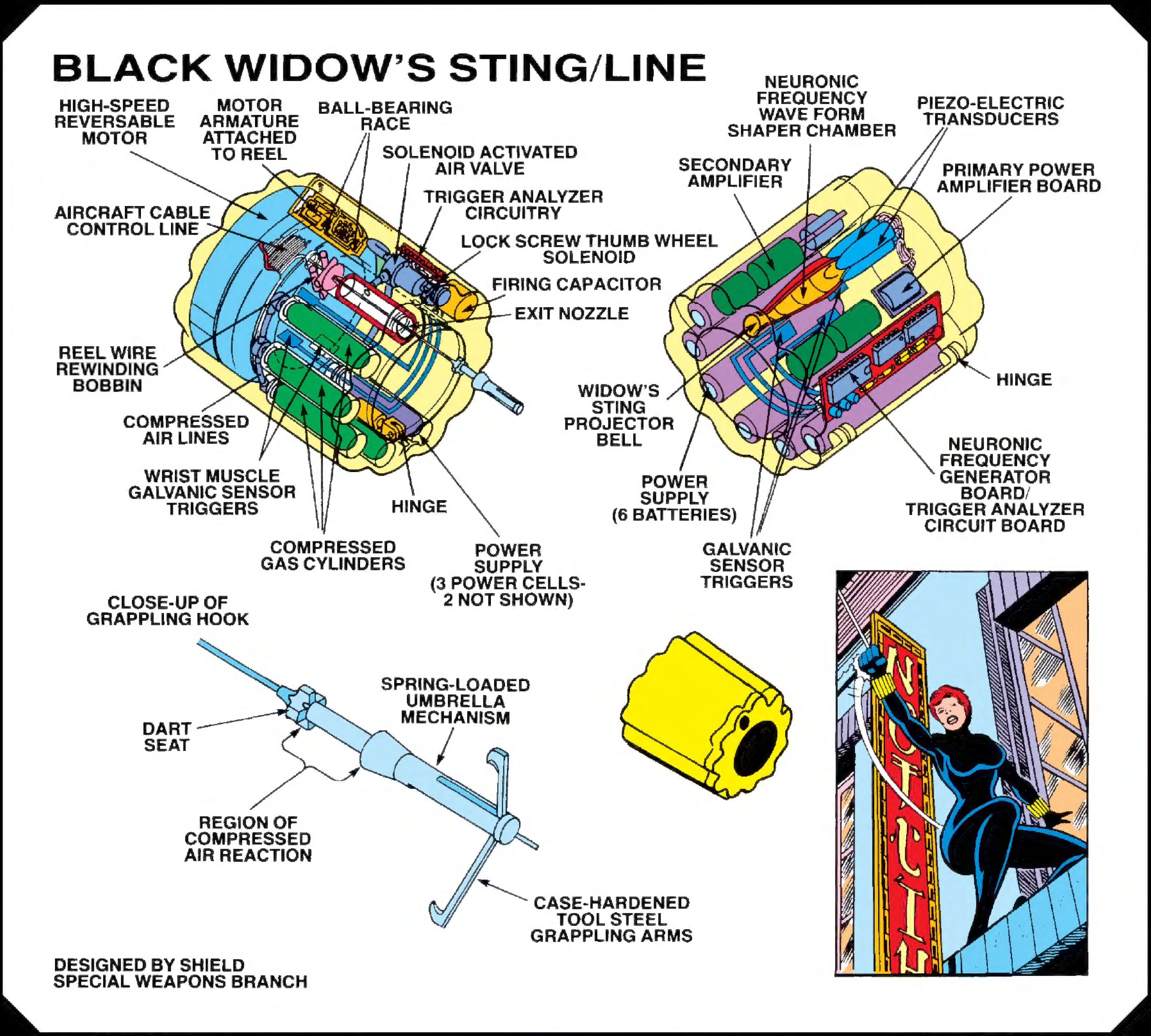
BLACK WIDOW

Real Name: Natasha (Romanoff) Romanova
Occupation: Spy
Legal status: Defected from U.S.S.R., operates in the U.S. under extended visa authorized by S.H.I.E.L.D.
Identity: Public
Place of birth: Stalingrad, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
Marital status: Widowed, once married to Alexi Shostakov, the original Red Guardian
Known relatives: None living
Group affiliation: Former Avenger, former S.H.I.E.L.D. agent, former partner of Daredevil
Base of operations: Mobile
First appearance: TALES OF SUSPENSE #52
Origin: Upon the supposed death of her test pilot husband Alexi, Natasha Romanova enlisted in the Soviet espionage agency, the KGB. Already a superbly trained dancer and athlete, Romanova learned the arts of espionage and was awarded the code name Black Widow. Her first field assignment was to infiltrate Stark Industries in America and assist her partner Boris in the assassination of the defector Professor Anton Vanko (the Crimson Dynamo). In her fourth mission she was given a special uniform designed by a Russian scientist named Brushnev. She soon defected and offered her services to S.H.I.E.L.D. (Supreme Headquarters International Espionage Law-Enforcement Division). She has since modified her uniform and weaponry twice.
Height: 5' 7"
Weight: 125 lbs
Eyes: Blue
Hair: Red-Auburn
Powers: The Black Widow possesses no superhuman abilities. She is, however, an Olympic level athlete and gymnast, and a master of several martial arts including karate, judo, akido, savate and boxing.
Weapons: The Black Widow's uniform is equipped with molecular-sized suction cups on her fingers and feet, activated with an electro-static charge, enabling her to stick to walls and ceilings made of standard building materials.

She sometimes carries other special weaponry. The cartridges of her wrist-bracelets contain a spring-loaded cable capable of shooting a hooked wire a hundred feet. Called her "widow's line," the cable is primarily used for swinging from building to building. The wrist-cartridges also carry a small device capable of emitting a high-frequency electrostatic charge of 30,000 volts a maximum distance of ten feet. This electro-blast, called her "widow's bite," is sufficient to stun a man at twenty feet. Other cartridges in her wrist-bracelets contain tear-gas pellets and a radio transmitter. She also sometimes wears a belt of metallic disc-cartridges. Each of these contains a plastic explosive equivalent to 4 pounds of TNT.



OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE #2
ART BY FRANK MILLER, JOSEF RUBINSTEIN & ANDY YANCHUS



BLACK WIDOW'S STING/LINE

HIGH-SPEED REVERSABLE MOTOR
MOTOR ARMATURE ATTACHED TO REEL
BALL-BEARING RACE
SOLENOID ACTIVATED AIR VALVE
TRIGGER ANALYZER CIRCUITRY
AIRCRAFT CABLE CONTROL LINE
LOCK SCREW THUMB WHEEL SOLENOID
FIRING CAPACITOR
EXIT NOZZLE
REEL WIRE REWINDING BOBBIN
COMPRESSED AIR LINES
WRIST MUSCLE GALVANIC SENSOR TRIGGERS
HINGE
COMPRESSED GAS CYLINDERS
POWER SUPPLY (3 POWER CELLS- 2 NOT SHOWN)
NEURONIC FREQUENCY WAVE FORM SHAPER CHAMBER
PIEZO-ELECTRIC TRANSDUCERS
SECONDARY AMPLIFIER
PRIMARY POWER AMPLIFIER BOARD
HINGE
WIDOW'S STING PROJECTOR BELL
NEURONIC FREQUENCY GENERATOR BOARD/ TRIGGER ANALYZER CIRCUIT BOARD
POWER SUPPLY (6 BATTERIES)
GALVANIC SENSOR TRIGGERS
CLOSE-UP OF GRAPPLING HOOK
SPRING-LOADED UMBRELLA MECHANISM
DART SEAT
REGION OF COMPRESSED AIR REACTION
CASE-HARDENED TOOL STEEL GRAPPLING ARMS
DESIGNED BY SHIELD SPECIAL WEAPONS BRANCH

OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE #15
ART BY ELIOT R. BROWN & ANDY YANCHUS

AM

THE WORLD'S GREATEST SUPERSPY IN HER FINEST TEAM-UPS!

First, the terror group Sword of Judgment threatens the end of the world — unless Natasha Romanoff and the Thing can stop them! Then, Spider-Man and the Widow form an arachnid double act to take on the Silver Samurai! But when they meet again, why does Natasha think she's a teacher named Nancy Rushman?! Maybe Nick Fury and Shang-Chi can help unravel the mystery of the Widow's double life! Plus: When a young man is wrongfully accused, Natasha must cross paths with old flame Daredevil. And it's all-out action when the Black Widow teams up with Silver Sable and Darkstar!

Collecting ***Marvel Two-In-One (1974) #10***, ***Marvel Team-Up (1972) #57***, ***#82-85***, ***#98*** and ***#140-141***, and material from ***Marvel Comics Presents (1988) #53***, ***#70*** and ***#93*** — written by Chris Claremont, Marv Wolfman, Roger McKenzie, Tom DeFalco, Bill Mantlo, Priest and more; and illustrated by Bob Brown, Sal Buscema, Will Meugniot, Ron Frenz, Greg LaRocque and more.